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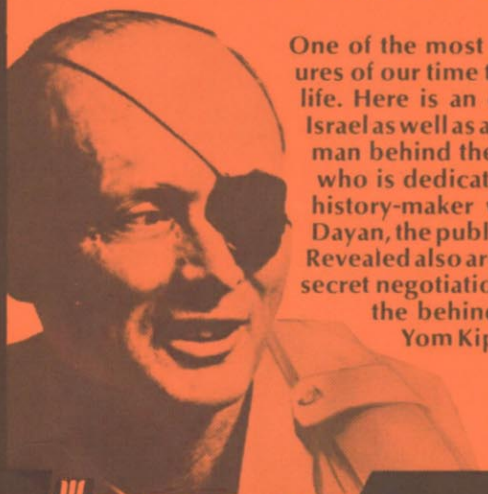

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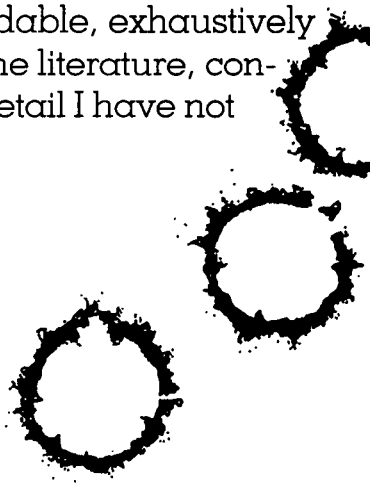

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Michael Harrington

On the 1976 Election

For other analyses of the Carter phenomenon, representing various views among the editors of Dissent *see our last issue, Summer 1976.*—EDS.

First, let me free myself of certain political constraints in this brief speculation about the Jimmy Carter phenomenon. That done, I think the analysis can be made much more candidly. I intend to vote for Carter and to work as hard as I can for his election. He is not, obviously, a socialist candidate, or, for that matter, a representative of the democratic left even though he moved in the latter direction during the months between his conquest of the nomination and his acceptance of it. There is much we don't know about the man, personally and politically; there may be some surprises, perhaps unpleasant ones.

I concede all this, and more. The fact remains that the question posed for the left is, Which holds out more hope for the future, a Carter or a Ford administration? The devotees of "vulture politics," who believe that defeats and humiliations radicalize people, can state their usual analysis. It will be as false as always. Those who believe that there is "no difference" between a president who would sign a bill for planned full employment and one who would veto it can retell the tale of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Those of us who understand that some gains can be won under Democrats and that gains, rather than defeats, hold out the possibility of energizing millions of people will fight to elect Carter.

I insist rather starkly on this point because I don't want to sneak it into my analysis proper, playing down the negative in the situation so as to lead the reader to my political conclusion without stating it clearly. Ford's election would be a catastrophe; Carter's election could be a point of departure. The trade unionists, minorities, feminists, and reformers would be in movement the day after a Carter victory and in paralysis the day after a Ford victory. I find it difficult to even imagine that there is a question of choice.

Now, to the more serious, taxing work: some first anticipations of a theory that places Carter in a historic context.

I insist on the extremely tentative nature of this enterprise for a reason. Events have already shown Carter to be a more complex politician than most. Normal political opportunism explains some of his shifts and contradictions, but it goes beyond that. The spokesman for "ethnic purity" had Martin Luther King, Sr., lead a civil rights rally from the podium at the Convention's end; the opponent of Vietnam "amnesty" is an advocate of Vietnam "pardon"; the ritual affirmer of "free enterprise" makes a populist assault on wealthy elites and promises some tax reform.

There is no easy label that fixes these paradoxes. Moreover, I think there was a great deal of the accidental, and not too much neo-Hegelian or Marxist necessity, in Carter's nomination. He was, as Jim Chapin noted in a shrewd article in the *Newsletter of the Democratic Left,* fortunate that the primary chronology allowed him to be the center-right candidate in New Hampshire, center-left in Florida, and center-center in Pennsylvania. The luck of that draw is not determined or even influenced by the emergence of the New South, or the alleged right turn in American politics, or the "Sun Belt" trend, or any of the other big abstractions. And this fact—that Carter owes more to luck than to any organized social or political forces—allows him the luxury of a certain indeterminacy, the ability to be enigmatic. It also cautions the analyst to be a bit provisional. Carter

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has not even begun to sit for his historical portrait; he is at least as difficult to predict as Franklin Roosevelt was in 1932 or John Kennedy in 1960. Probably more so.

WITH my escape hatches thus firmly in place, let me begin with a generalization that might seem to be, and perhaps is, a partial contradiction of all these self-imposed caveats. One factor that made it possible—not necessary, but possible—for Carter to win the Democratic nomination was that he mirrored, or incarnated, the nation's confusion. Whether this was a conscious choice or simply the chance rendezvous of a personality and a historic moment favorable to it, I don't know. For several years, the nation has been moving left, right, and center. Ask the average citizen, What about the federal government? and he/she would sound like Ronald Reagan. Ask, What shall we do about health, or unemployment, or the energy crisis? and he/she would reply like Hubert Humphrey—or a left critic of Humphrey. "Small is beautiful" is popular; so are national health, government last-resort hiring, and public ownership and development of some energy resources.

Carter, whether you take him as a Machiavellian or the honest tribune of popular confusion, was as inconsistent as the electorate. Stephanie Harrington captured that aspect in an inspired image: he is, she said, a political Rorschach blot, and everyone sees their own fantasy in him.

That might be an eminently functional mode for a candidate seeking a nomination. It is not a program for government. So I think the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page—normally the most sectarian, dogmatic spot in the country this side of Trotskyist splinters—was right when it argued that Carter did not suffer so much from lack of specificity as from contradictory, liberal and conservative, specifications: balanced budgets and full employment, national health and less government, anti-Washington and federal interventionism. In his acceptance speech, he resolved these antinomies by moving toward a fairly coherent Democratic-party liberalism. But he still evokes seven types of political ambiguity and if he wins—which seems likely in this summer of 1976—the question will be, How does he resolve them in governmental action?

Before turning to what seems to me to be the most revealing antinomy—full employment/price stability—some historic limits must be defined. Carter will not make history under circumstances of his own choosing. If he wins power, it will be in the era of state-integrated, multinational-firm-dominated, late capitalism. The possible—as it is politically and economically circumscribed under these circumstances (and need I add that I favor transforming the circumstances and redefining the possible?)—extends from shamefaced corporate collectivism by Republicans to an avowed, but contradictory, corporate collectivism under the Democrats. The latter are torn between the forces of technocratic co-optation of popular pressures, and the popular pressures themselves. These last, usually unwittingly, point toward structural change. If Carter wins, the big historical question and the immediate policy issues will converge: which basic, and long-range, tendency does his short-run program promote?

Full employment is shaping up as a decisive litmus. At the time of the Democratic national platform hearings in May, the Hawkins-Humphrey bill for planned full employment was an article of faith. By the time the corresponding platform affirmation of it was adopted in New York in July, it was questionable how many of the delegates voting for the bill really believed in it. In the intervening period, it has been subjected to a devastatingly effective attack by liberal economists under the direction of Charles Schultze.

Schultze and company made a left-right assault on Hawkins-Humphrey. Rediscovering the reserve army of the unemployed, they held that inflationary trends would develop in skilled labor markets when unemployment drops to 5.5 percent—i.e., at that moment when we start to reach out to the minority, female, and teenaged jobless. They pointed out that a decently paid "last resort" program of federal job creation would subvert the private market of poverty ($2.50 an hour) jobs. If one accepts the present structure of the economy as a given, they are right on the main points even though they overdraw their case. But there is, of course, a huge qualification at work: *whether one adapts to that given or tries to transform it.*

This, I suspect, will be a basic litmus test for left-right in what I hope will be the Carter administration (which, even if it took a rightist stance on the issue, would be left of Ford-Reagan, i.e., would have some custodial job programs, extended unemployment benefits, and other measures to soften the cruelty of the status quo). If one is talking not simply about lesser-evilism but about a point of departure, as I am, this is a critical area.

In part, Hawkins-Humphrey would fight inflation on its own, a point not stressed in the Schultze

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THE EDITORS

critique. Each percent of joblessness costs $16 billion in direct federal expenses for unemployment compensation and other ameliorative programs. Reduce the national level to "3 percent adult unemployment"—the H-H goal—and, depending on your definition of adult, you will save between $48 billion and $80 billion in these outlays. However, there is no doubt that the problems envisaged by Schultze and company would persist even despite such "savings."

One possible answer would be the tax reform Carter has made his most radical plank (and even before his acceptance speech). The potentially inflationary effect of a federal budget generating new jobs could be offset by reducing the tax expenditures—"welfare payments"—for the rich. There are a total of $106 billion such expenditures in the '77 budget; many, but not all, handouts to the wealthy. In the jockeying over the Democratic platform, the Labor Coalition (the more progressive unions, such as the UAW, AFSCME, and IAM, which had come together against the war and for McGovern and developed a formal organization for this campaign) and Democracy '76, the issue coalition I helped organize, both emphasized this point. We pushed for the AFL-CIO position that attacked both the tax gains exemptions, worth $13 billion for 1977. The Carter people bought the closing of the overseas loophole but rejected the much more progressive assault on capital gains.

That could have been campaign strategy; it could be sincere conservatism (or rather, stand-patism, since it takes a fairly *left*-wing liberal to go for the capital gains jugular). Then Carter was forthright, in a general way, in the acceptance speech and very fuzzy at a meeting with businessmen in New York a week later. In any case, this will be a crucial test, not simply in terms of wealth redistribution, but also in relation to full employment. The rich could help finance jobs for the unemployed by having their tax welfare abolished; the unemployed could promote price stability for the rich by staying unemployed. This is obviously a crossroads; and it will be revealing in the extreme to see which fork Carter takes.

BUT EVEN supposing a new Democratic administration would make the right—which is to say, left—decision, the inflation specter would still not be exorcised. The gross impact of a budget that would fund some jobs is one problem; but there remains the tightening of labor markets when the jobless rate comes down, a trend identified by Karl Marx somewhat before Schultze. This tendency is, of course, exacerbated by the monopoly power of giant corporations, which, by means of administered prices, pass the cost on to the consumer. An income policy—controls—will be the only way to deal with this threat.

Only, income policies in capitalist economies have a built-in penchant for favoring the rich (profits) and disciplining the majority (wages). It is not totally clear how successful the Nixon administration was in "zapping" labor with its

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controls, but it probably did a fairly good job of it. This is not simply because of Nixon's corporate bias, though that was a factor. But even assuming a liberal administration—or a social democratic one, like Denis Healey's exchequer in the present Labour government—there is a disposition to favor profits. This is not because liberals, or socialists, "sell out." It is a consequence of the fact that the corporations dominate the investment process and can argue that profits, which reinforce their elite power and maldistribute the rewards of society, are socially virtuous and superior to wages because, in a capitalist economy, they finance new investment, which is to say, new jobs.

The wariness of American unions in this area is well-advised. However, what is needed is wariness, not outright rejection. If the controls extend, as the AFL-CIO has always insisted, to dividends, executive compensation, rental income, etc., they could even be redistributionist—but then only *if* the government were willing to take a much more socially interventionist attitude toward investment. Washington now intervenes in many cases, but always on the side of corporations and in the service of their priorities, e.g., the investment tax credits help companies flee New York or develop labor-displacing technology. To shift this prejudice would be an even more radical move than abolishing tax bonanzas. It would involve restricting investment credits to socially approved outlays (helping a region like the Northeast; creating jobs for minorities and/or women; etc.), allocating credit (anti-redlining laws); public enterprise, like a TVA-type oil corporation (rather than the $100 billion in cheap credit for oil malefactors proposed by Ford and Rockefeller) or nationalization of railroads. With such weapons, the government could resist corporate blackmail in an incomes policy. Without them, it would probably come up with a new version of "trickle down," i.e., on the side of profits as against wages.

If one of the liberal candidates had won the nomination, it is not in the least certain that he would go as far as is needed. Carter almost certainly will not. But what *direction* will he take? That is what we must watch.

If he wins, this political Rorschach blot will have to go representational. There is no reason for high hopes—or despair. The political fact, which should determine our vote, is that he cannot possibly be worse than Nixon-Ford; he must be better. Beyond that, I prefer only to set up the criteria for a historical evaluation: watch Carter's position on Hawkins-Humphrey. That will be a crucial litmus.

Erazim Kohák

Italia Sinistra: A Report from Rome

There is nothing that can put the Italian crisis into perspective quite like a few weeks in Italy itself, riding the rickety buses, coping with the ineffectual officialdom, bringing fresh linens to neglected patients in state hospitals, eating in desperate little trattorias, and being hooted aside by the arrogant rich in their Alfa Romeos in the shabby, littered streets. It is not about the Defense of Christian Values or about the Rebirth of Communism: it is a search for an effective government that would, at last, govern and not simply hold office.

The Italian voters have signaled as much in the last election. They did not vote for the spectrum of minuscule parties that might most faithfully represent their own personal political preferences and interests. Instead, three-quarters of them cast their ballots for the two parties that may be strong enough to govern. Some 40 percent of them voted for the Christian Democrats, some 34 percent for the Communists.

On paper, these results look like the makings of an effective coalition government with support from both the right and the left, balancing a dominant partner with an internal opposition and ideally equipped to tackle the accumulated problems of years of nongovernment.

This contention, however, holds only on paper, especially if the author of that paper is a Communist. In practice, a grand coalition of Italy's two big parties is deeply problematic. The potential senior partner, the Democrazia Cristiana, emerged from the elections with some requisite gains. Those gains, however, were won at the expense of the splinter parties of the center, caused less by the DC's intrinsic appeal than by the repugnance that most Italians feel for the Communist alternative. It is a mandate for a rebirth of the Christian Democratic party, hardly for a coalition with the Communists.

Is the mandate enough? Certainly, the Democrazia Cristiana, for all its recent ills, is still an impressive political force. Unlike most European political parties, it is not an ideological sect but a highly pragmatic political organization subsuming a broad range of ideological preferences

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brought together by a common, practical political interest.

In the postwar years, it was the Christian Democrats' skill at the art of the *sottogoverno*—getting things done behind the scenes by a judicious balancing of favors and obligations—that may have saved Italian democracy. Without it, the vacuum left by the collapse of the Fascist organization might well have been filled by the only other organization available, the Communist party. Had that happened, today's Communist leaders would by now be martyrs like their East European colleagues. Instead, they are alive and well and free to run in an election. That is a great achievement.

But the *sottogoverno*, familiar to Americans as party-machine politics, has vices as well as virtues. It is a way, probably the only way, to make democracy function in a community devoid of civic consciousness. But it is also notoriously vulnerable to corruption. After a few years in power, *sottogoverno* becomes *malgoverno*—and the Christian Democrats have been in power for 30 years.

Given the DC's resilience, the rejuvenation mandated by the voters may still be possible. But, while crucial to Italy's rebirth, that is not enough. The task demands more than a nominal parliamentary majority. To control Italy's double-digit inflation, to overhaul its bloated administration, to reform its welfare system, to put its major industries, virtually all state-owned, on a sound footing, and to rationalize its chaotic small enterprises, to exact a modicum of civic responsibility from the labor unions and the arrogant rich, for all this even a thoroughly rejuvenated Democrazia Cristiana would still need support in depth on the left.

Unfortunately, the obvious partners, the various democratic socialist parties, cannot provide that support. Their strength is not electoral. They do include some of Italy's most respected figures—Giuseppe Saragat, for instance, is a social democrat—and they provide some of the clearest and soberest perspectives on Italy's problems. But they don't win votes and lack the grass-roots organization that does.

The fault is not altogether their own. In a country without a tradition of private support for public causes, it is virtually impossible to build a grass-roots organization without outside aid. The Communists receive such aid from the Soviet Union. As Michael Ledeen and Claire Sterling have shown, the form of that aid has shifted, in recent years, from outright grants to commissions on the lucrative Italo-Soviet trade, but the amounts remain substantial. The Christian Democrats, for their part, received aid from America. The scale and the duration were more modest, but, as the ruling party, the Christian Democrats could augment it with patronage and business contributions.

The socialists were no one's sweetheart. To the Soviets, they were anathema. The Americans, though used to a two-party system at home, did not have the insight to invest in a democratic opposition as well as in a democratic majority. On their own, the socialists never built up an extensive grass-roots organization. Then, like all top-heavy movements that are excluded from practical politics, they suffered a series of theoretical splits. One of them destroyed the socialists as a cohesive alternative. Today Italy's socialist parties simply are not a significant political force and, barring a concerted effort on the part of other European Social Democratic parties, analogous to that mounted in Portugal, are unlikely to become so. For better or for worse, the significant force on the left is the Communist party (CPI).

THERE'S THE RUB.The PCI, for all the democratic protestations of its leaders, remains a problematic partner for a movement whose chief appeal has been that of an alternative to Communism. The PCI, unlike, for instance, the French Communist party, has never been simply a blind tool of Moscow. The parallel between Lenin's Communism and Mussolini's Fascism is too obvious—and the Italian Communists have had their experience with Fascism. Their first leader, Antonio Gramsci, wrote most of his works in one of Mussolini's prisons. Had his jailer been Lenin, Gramsci would not have had much chance to write—or survive. The point was not lost on the PCI. Even Carlo Pajetta, a hard-liner in domestic matters, supports the struggle of individual Communist parties for independence from Moscow as did the postwar leader, Palmiro Togliatti. In this matter, the PCI is genuinely different.

The PCI's present chairman, Enrico Berlinguer, is leading his party even farther in a democratic direction. In one speech after another, including the speeches to his followers, he insists that democracy is a necessary condition of socialism. He has commited his party to a regard for individual rights, to a respect and a support for

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democratic norms and to an observance of the full rights of the opposition, including its right to become a new majority. In an interview published in *Corriere della Sera*, he even admitted the need for the NATO shield to protect his democratic Communism against the fate of Dubček. The change is profound: Mr. Berlinguer is no rhetorical revolutionary grasping for a mystical "power." He is a politician seeking office in a democracy and is commited to preserving it.

Unfortunately, the party he heads is far from democratic and, as Austria's Prime Minister Bruno Kreisky points out, would lose much of its relevance if it were. Italy is a country passing through an incredibly rapid modernization. A great percentage of its voters are people who have been abruptly deprived of their traditional truths and community constraints. They are often uprooted, bewildered, and confused, hardly ready for the responsibility that social democracy would entail. They turn to the Communist party precisely because it is *not* democratic, but disciplined and dedicated and so able to tell them what to believe and what to do.

Another point. Like all countries in transition, Italy is a land of dramatic social contrasts. Nowhere in Europe are the rich as arrogant and as ostentatious as here. Certainly, the effective solution is nondramatic: a progressive taxation with special attention to ostentatious luxury, such as tax on personal property from which "normal personal belongings" are exempt. But the spontaneous response to the arrogance of wealth is emotional. The Communist party wins adherents by catering to the need for revolutionary rhetoric. Were it to give it up in favor of consistently democratic approaches, it would no longer meet that need.

Unfortunately, rhetoric, dedication and discipline are not marginal to Communism. They are precisely what distinguishes the Communist version of "socialism" from the democratic. The dialectical contortions of Marxist academicians and film directors are games of the privileged, irrelevant to any political reality. Even the Communist party program is anything but distinctive. Most of Italy's major enterprises are already state controlled, the Communists support minor private enterprise and as for social welfare and administrative efficiency, even the Christian Democrats support those. The unique appeal of the Communists, as of the Fascists before them, is their no-nonsense posture with its combination of rhetoric, dedication and discipline. This posture may solve no problems; it may even create some new ones, as with the vigilante committees to which the Communist municipal administration resorted in Bologna. But it meets a real emotional need—and wins votes.

That, finally, is the other difference. Czechoslovakia's Dubček in a stable, mature society, could transform his Communist party into a democratic socialist one—and, but for the armed Soviet occupation, could have succeeded. His party was fully behind him and often even ahead of him: in Czechoslovakia, Communism with its discipline and dedication is a farcical anachronism. In Italy, unfortunately, it is not and will not be that for perhaps another generation. For the present, Mr. Berlinguer, no matter how democratic, must remain Communist to retain his following.

YET THIS is only half the story. Italy may be a country in transition, but it is not a backward country like Russia. It is the world's seventh industrial power with a rich cultural tradition and a rapidly modernizing society. Segments of that society may still need a Communist party, but, in a generation, they will be ready for social democracy—if they are still free to choose. Some Italians need the Communists, but Italy as a whole needs the freedom to outgrow that need and to keep the future options open. The last thing Italy needs is a Bolshevik Putsch, which would bring the Communists to power and freeze social development at the particularly unfortunate stage marked by the need for discipline and dedication.

The great significance of Berlinguer is that he seems aware of this. He cannot make the Communists into social democrats, but he realizes that, as Communists, they can make a positive contribution in office rather than in power, participating in rather than destroying Italian democracy. His Euro-Communism is no brave new creed nor yet a respectable way for the aging ex-faithful to recover their brave old creed with a newly clean conscience. With its mixture of dedication, discipline, and dictatorship, Communism will always be at best a necessary tool of transition, not a model for a mature society. But Berlinguer's model of Communism within rather than instead of democracy may make that tool available without jeopardizing future growth.

This is the option for which Berlinguer, Segre, and other Italian Communist reformers argue persuasively. The possibility is attractive and their sincerity convincing, though old postures, habits, and associations repeatedly shake one's con-

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fidence. For instance, once a Communist party opts for democracy, the democratic socialists become its natural allies. But Berlinguer did not hold a round of consultations with Austria's Bruno Kreisky, West Germany's Helmut Schmidt, Britain's Harold Wilson, or Sweden's Olaf Palme. Instead, he attended a conference of Communist parties, convocated by the Soviet Union in East Berlin and including such people as Czechoslovakia's Gustav Husák or Roumania's Ceausescu, no friends of freedom. Berlinguer defended his views before them, but his presence acknowledged his associations, which he could not break without losing his party's support.

Similarly, while Berlinguer did acknowledge the need for NATO to protect Italy's Communists from the Soviets, the editor of his own party's daily, *L'Unità*, censored out that statement when reprinting the interview. Earlier, Mr. Berlinguer's declaration of democratic principles was co-signed by Mr. G. Marchais, chairman of the French Communist party that had obediently approved Soviet aggression in Czechoslovakia and now condemned the Israeli rescue of skyjacked hostages at Entebbe. Berlinguer, with his Michael Harrington smile, his obvious earnestness and sincerity, inspires confidence; the policy he proposes inspires hope. His associates inspire neither.

But such misgivings, while serious, may well be academic. Italian needs, rather than East-West relations, are the decisive factor and Italy, more than anything else, needs to be governed. An extended interregnum with the attendant infrastructural breakdown serves no one except the hardest hard-liners waiting for a collapse to seize power and work their will. The preservation of democracy depends first of all on effective governance and Italy cannot be governed effectively by the right or the left alone. The Communists—heading the kind of quixotic "government of the true left" that some Spanish Communists recommend for Spain—could no more govern Italy than a Christian Democratic government of the right, even if either scraped together enough votes to hold office. To tackle Italy's problems effectively, a government would need the support of both the Church and the unions, of both Western capital and Italian labor. Certainly, it would be much nicer if the left were democratic socialists. But a right-left coalition is needed, and the significant force on the left is the CPI.

Given the Christian Democratic talent for *sottogoverno*, it may well be that such a coalition will take place invisibly, with the Communists holding no posts in the government but sharing power informally in exchange for tacit support, saving embarrassment to both parties. Or such a coalition might take place and produce a split among the Communists, with the democratic wing fusing with the socialists to form a new force on the left while the hard-liners continue to cater to the residual need for discipline and dedication, with possibly an analogous split in the Christian Democracy. Or it may be that such a coalition will prove impossible until both the Democrazia Cristiana and the Partito Communista each had their turn at failing.

POSSIBILITIES ABOUND, but the long-range alternatives are clear. One is that of a sharpening confrontation between the right and the left, each dominated by its radical wing, leading ultimately to a clash in which democracy would be the loser, regardless of which side prevailed. The other alternative is that of an increasing collaboration between the DC and the PCI, fostering the growth of a broad democratic center capable of subduing the radical fringe on both sides. As long as the Communists remain a factor, the latter course, whatever its risks, is infinitely preferable. Berlinguer's democratic turn, again whatever its factual limitations, makes it a possibility.

Italy's crisis, finally, is not economic, even though its evident economic symptoms can seem overwhelming. But Italy's economic house, while in great disorder, is structurally sound and the country's economic achievements are impressive. Contrary to their popular image and even their self-image, the Italians are an ingenious, hard-working and versatile people with a tremendous potential—if they can forge an effective social framework that will enable them to unfold that potential.

Similarly, I do not believe that the crisis is psychological, even though the Italians love to dissect the flaws of their "national character" at great length. Certainly, Italian society does tolerate some extremely unlovely traits, such as a particularly repugnant combination of the *machismo* of a vain bully with the *mamismo* of a whining child. But that again is a symptom of transition. But given a sense of purpose, the Italians are capable of great achievements, as they have proved more than once.

The sense of frustrated impotence pervades all of Italy today; but its roots, I am convinced, are

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constitutional in the broad sense of the way a society constitutes and governs itself. It is not unique to Italy. European parliaments simply were not geared to governing: that, for centuries, had been the prerogative and the responsibility of the monarch. Parliaments represented, speaking to—or against—the monarch with advice, consent or dissent, but without responsibility for leadership. When the monarchies collapsed, their corresponding parliaments continued to represent—and one European country after another passed through a "crisis of democracy" while groping for a parliamentary system that would not only represent but also govern.

Now it is Italy's turn. The crisis is more acute because the Italians modeled their parliament on those of strong monarchies without ever having had a strong monarchy themselves. Traditionally, Italy has been overrepresented and undergoverned. Its problem is to forge a system of self-government that would be both effective and democratic.

The shift of votes to the two major parties may be one component in the solution, as it has been in other European countries. The rebirth of the Democrazia Cristiana as a mature, responsible political force could be the second. Finally, the shift of the PCI from rhetorical hostility to responsible participation in the democratic process could be the missing link. The point at issue is not whether the Communists or the non-Communists will "rule Italy." It is, rather, whether Italy will have to be ruled—or whether it will finally generate a viable system of democratic self-government.

That is a realistic starting point for enlightened foreign policy toward Italy as well. The idea of a NATO shield protecting a government that includes the Communists may seem paradoxical. But America has never had reason to regret John Foster Dulles's decision to support Tito in his defiance of Moscow. It has had reason to regret Eisenhower's decision to override Dulles's recommendation of a similar policy toward Ho Chi Minh. In Italy, it is not even a question of "supporting the Communists." One Italian in three may vote Communist, but Italy itself is not Communist nor likely to "go Communist" if it can learn to govern itself effectively. The question is whether the West, American and European, will support Italy in its search for a mature democratic government or drive Italy toward a destructive polarization.

It may be the final irony but I hope that whoever will be America's new secretary of state will be, in this respect, at least as wise as John Foster Dulles. □

Menahem Milson

Arabs and Israeli Attitudes

This article is reprinted, with the editors' permission, from the English-language Kibbutz journal Shdemot *(issue 4, 1975). A Hebrew version appeared in the early '70s in the Israeli daily* Davar. *The author is a senior lecturer in Arabic literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.*—EDS.

We propose here to examine some of the beliefs underlying the Arabs' anti-Israel ideology, and to try and ascertain whether it is possible to find any openings through which their position can be penetrated. It is not enough, however, to describe and analyze the Arab position: we also have to ask ourselves what ideological line of thought we should pursue in view of the Arab attitude.

In order to understand the Arab position we have to dig down to the fundamental level of Arab collective consciousness; for it is from this that the various Arab ideologies emanate.

In this context we regard the Arabs as Muslims, for in fact the Arab peoples (with the exception of Lebanon) are Muslim peoples. In the territory west of the Jordan, for example, over 90 percent of the population are Muslims. True, there are non-Muslim minorities in the Arab countries, but their Arab nationality is predominantly Muslim in character. No better authority could be quoted on these points than Michel 'Aflaq, the Christian ideologist of the Ba'th movement. He writes that, although he is a Christian, as an Arab national he identifies himself with Muslim history, since the Arabs became welded into a nation within the framework of Islam.

Ideally the Muslims conceive their position *vis-à-vis* the non-Muslims and the world of foreigners at large as one of supremacy. This does not mean merely religious supremacy but political and military supremacy, achieved by means of conquest and victory or else by their ability to impose upon the other side arrangements suitable to themselves.

This ideal self-image has its roots in the

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underlying stratum of the Islamic faith. Islam was validated at the beginning of its history by means of the victory that Allah vouchsafed to the Prophet Muhammad's army at the Battle of Badr in 624. On that occasion the Muslim forces, numbering about 300, vanquished their foes, whose strength amounted to 950 men. According to Muslim tradition the angels of heaven fought on the side of the Muslim warriors. The military victory at Badr validated Muhammad's message, and that validation was repeatedly confirmed in a series of victories and conquests in the course of the first Islamic century. This success story became part of Islamic religious consciousness. Islam not only promises its believers that they will inherit paradise in the hereafter: it promises them that they will be part of a victorious people in this world as well. The Muslim outlook does not envisage the possibility of Muslims living permanently under non-Muslim rule.

This outlook gives rise to the following paradox: the validity of the Islamic religion, in the consciousness of the Muslims themselves, depends upon the political and military might of the Muslim states.

The Muslims' belief that they belong to a victorious people has not been questioned for centuries. It could be argued that this was an illusion; but it was an illusion that was not destroyed until modern times. This belief was shaken, however, as a result of the violent impact of the West, which led to the conquest of several Muslim countries by Christian powers. From the end of the last century, in particular, Muslim intellectuals have been forced to acknowledge that in fact their peoples, far from being victorious, had become weak, and that their weakness derived from their backwardness in many spheres. This realistic appraisal was in direct contradiction to their own self-image. Indeed, when they awoke to the recognition of their weakness in relation to the European nations, they regarded it as a terrible distortion of history, a distortion that threatened their very identity as a collective unless they succeeded in regaining their lost greatness.

The modernists amongst the Muslims maintained that the way to put things right was to acquire Western technology, especially in the military sphere: to learn from the West in order to be able to vie with it. And here we perceive an inner conflict that causes a dichotomy in the soul of the modern Muslim: in order to defend his collective identity against the foreigner he has to learn from him.

The encounter with modern civilization led to a diminution of the influence of religion in Arab society; or rather it led to a decline in religious dogmas. But those Muslims who had been influenced by their contact with Western civilization adhered to the other aspect of Islam, that of militant nationalism and the myth of greatness. Indeed, one sometimes has the impression that, in order to make up for their omissions in the sphere of religious practice and traditional belief, they cling all the more jealously to the myth of Islamic greatness.

Arab, or Pan-Arab, nationalism is in fact founded upon the myth of Islam. A cursory investigation into the question is enough to show that "the great Arab Homeland," stretching from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf, is virtually a modern version of the traditional concept of *Dār al-Islām* (i.e., the area governed by Muslim rulers). The heroes of Arab nationalism are the heroes of Islam, e.g., the Prophet Muhammad, the Caliph Omar, and the great general Saladin. Many of its slogans are taken from the Koran and religious terminology. Thus it is certainly no coincidence that the principal guerrilla movement chose as its name the word *Fath* (conquest), which appears in the 110th Chapter of the Koran, entitled "The Victory," in which Allah promises victory to the Islamic faith.*

The national aspect is an essential element of Arab-Muslim identity and is common to all Muslim Arabs, observant and nonobservant alike. We may conjecture that this element is especially intensive among those who have thrown off the yoke of traditional observance. As already stated, Christian Arabs who accept Arab nationalism also necessarily identify themselves with the myth of Muslim glory. The various Arab ideologies—those of Nasser's "Philosophy of the Revolution," of the Ba'th (of both right and left), of the Muslim Brotherhood and of the Fath—all try to fulfill the aspirations emanating from this level of Muslim consciousness.

The process of decolonization that has taken place in the Arab lands of the Middle East and

*_Fath_ is in fact a reverse formation of _hatf_, the initial letters of _Harakat Tahrir Filastin_ ["Movement for the Liberation of Palestine," or "_Fatah_" in other forms of spelling]. _Hatf_, however, is in itself a word and denotes death, specifically natural death, i.e., not in the field of battle. Hence it is obvious why the name _Fath_ formed by reversing the letters was preferred.

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North Africa since the end of the Second World War, the emergence of the so-called progressive regimes, and the undertaking of development projects—all these have created in the minds of many Arabs the belief—or maybe the new illusion—that history is once again reverting to its proper course, from which it had been deflected.

II

THE ESTABLISHMENT of the State of Israel put a cruel end to this Arab illusion. Hence the defeat the Arabs suffered at our hands is for them not merely a political problem: it is a threat to their self-esteem and to their identity as Arabs. Israel has not only torn off a piece of Arab Homeland but has imposed its government on Muslims and repeatedly defeated Arab armies. Moreover, Israel is a state that was set up by a small and weak nation—a nation that, according to the Muslim conception, ought to be suffering humiliation and is destined to be a tolerated minority in the Muslim state.

In saying that Israel is seen as having taken away part of the Arab Homeland we do not convey the full gravity of the situation; for that part is not just any area within the domain of Islam, such as a border territory in Kazakhstan or Eritrea: it is a country with a very special status in the Muslim tradition.

In articles written by Arabs on the Palestine issue nowadays, we come across phrases such as "if Israel continues to exist, Arabism will perish." To me it seems that we must understand such phrases not merely as propaganda clichés but as an expression of the fearful anxiety that fills the hearts of the Arabs regarding the meaning of their identity and their worth as Arabs. This may help to explain the emotional involvement of Arabs in places far away from Israel like Tunisia, Libya, and Iraq in the Palestine issue.

These emotions are especially intense amongst the Arabs of Palestine. Jerusalem occupies the position of the third holiest sanctuary in Islam in the consciousness of all Muslims; but for the Palestinians it occupies a unique position as their own holy place. Thus their emotional link with Jerusalem is quite naturally even stronger than with Mecca. Moreover, the Arabs of Jerusalem and Hebron have special rites connected with the holy shrines in those towns as well as long-standing local traditions. Owing to the peculiar concatenation of historical circumstances in this country, the places that are sacred and dear to us are also sacred and dear to the local Arabs. Thus, in addition to the outlook common to all Muslims, we have to reckon, in the case of the Palestinian Arabs, with a special emotional involvement that exacerbates their quarrel with us.

It seems to me highly important to recognize this aspect of Arab national consciousness for two reasons: first, so as to prevent our fostering any illusions that it is easy to effect changes in the Arab attitude, or that the issues involved are merely political in character; and second, in order that we may correctly assess expressions of readiness to compromise on the part of the Arabs, if and when they are voiced. It is possible that a relatively moderate point of view expressed by some Arab does not seem to us at first glance to be noticeably different from the extreme Arab position; whereas if we take into account the change of values that had to take place in the mind of the Arab expressing such an attitude, we shall realize that this is a step in the required direction. In this connection an important rule has to be borne in mind, namely, that a moderate expression of Arab views is significant when addressed to *an Arab audience*, whereas if it is uttered in English or French to a visiting foreign statesman or journalist, it has to be scrutinized carefully to make sure that it is not just a propaganda move or tactical gambit.

Following the above attempt to delineate in brief the Arabs' *a priori* attitude toward Israel, I should like to pose another question: Does the Muslim *Weltanschauung* take into account the possibility of a settlement with non-Muslim countries? The answer is, Yes. For even though the Muslims are bidden to wage war in order to conquer the world, they are permitted—provided the balance of power makes it necessary—to reach peaceful accommodations with their adversaries. Empirical realities led to the result that even the normative Muslim conception made provision for ending wars with non-Muslims. Needless to say, this approach does not recognize the notion of "true" or "lasting" peace but only the peace deriving from *ad hoc* settlements. Some experts on international affairs might argue that "true" peace is a term that rightly belongs to the field of rhetoric rather than politics, and that in real situations peace is an arrangement that emerges from a balance of power. According to the Muslim point of view permitting a settlement with non-Muslim adversaries, there is some moral justification for reaching an accommodation with a *powerful enemy*. But not with a weak one.

According to Muslim theory, peace agreements are always made for a stipulated period of time—

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up to 10 years. But they are renewable upon the termination of that period.

III

IF WE ARE to come to grips with the Arab ideological approach, we must first understand how the Arabs picture us. Their idea of us can perhaps best be described as a caricature of our attitude. We have to learn what their mistakes are in evaluating our policy and aspirations, first in order to ascertain whether anything can be done to alter the distorted image created in their minds, and second—and more important—to avoid our repeating the same mistakes.

The Arabs picture Israeli policy as a consistent one, its aims having been determined as far back as the end of the last century. According to them the Zionist aim is to establish a great Jewish empire stretching from the Euphrates to the Nile. This is the true aspiration of Zionism, and the Zionists have always intended—and still intend—to achieve it by displacing and/or subjugating the Arab population. This is the purpose that governs the various moves made by Zionist policy. According to this view, the Six-Day War was planned in advance by the Zionists, who succeeded, by means of various international plots and stratagems, in luring the Arabs into a trap. The same Arab theory, in a somewhat more sophisticated form, maintains that while the Zionists may not actually have engineered all the events that took place here during the past eight years, their aim was certainly well-defined, and that aim was expansion. Whenever circumstances were favorable, the Zionists moved forward and made further conquests. In this view, it was not expressions of hatred or acts of terrorism on the part of the Arabs that exercised any real influence on Zionist policy or even on Israeli opinion: according to the Arabs, these only furnished excuses the Zionists seized upon to justify their expansionist activities. This view—and it is widely accepted among the Arabs—states that people like Scheib and Beigin are the ones who represent the true spirit of Zionism, whereas the other leaders are hypocrites who, for tactical reasons, hide their expansionist intentions under a cloak of cunning and deceit.

This view appears in our eyes so utterly distorted that, if it were not for the fact that its consequences are so injurious, we could permit ourselves to laugh it to scorn. This Arab outlook postulates that there is no point in the Arabs' making any moderate moves, as in any event they can have no effect whatever on Israeli intentions; the Arabs are the ones who have to wage war, since they have no alternative. Hence the function of this theory is to justify Arab extremism and intransigence.

It is no exaggeration to say that extremist Israeli utterances *à la* Scheib or Beigin serve, albeit unwittingly, the end of the proponents of the extremist Arab doctrine. On the other hand, while one cannot say with certainty that more moderate utterances would demolish the Arab theory, they would certainly not buttress it. It suits our enemies' book very well to represent us as extremists, as people thirsting for expansion. Their reasoning is very clear. But do we really want to play the game according to their rules and appear in the colors in which they choose to paint us?

The ideologists of al-Fath take great pains to prove, by means of pseudohistorical researches, that the Jews are not a nation. This attitude is manifest in the "Palestine Covenant," which includes a clause (Article 20 of the Covenant) stating that the Jews are not a nation, but only a religious entity. Why do the Fath concern themselves altogether with this question? After all, they have a prior argument, namely, their claim that the Arabs have an absolute right to all Palestine. It seems that they are nevertheless not quite so certain of the strength of their argument and that they consequently have need of a further argument to support it, *viz*, that not only have the Jews no share in Palestine because it belongs to the Arabs, but that the Jews are anyway not a people at all, hence they have *ab initio* no right to demand self-determination.

It is distressing to see that we now have in our midst writers and political leaders who are making great efforts to prove, by means of pseudohistorical or pseudosociological arguments, that the Palestinian Arabs never were a nation and cannot possibly ever be one. Obviously, articles and speeches in this vein will have no effect whatever in altering the Palestinian Arabs' feelings or the course of their activities. Such publications can only be detrimental to us as they disseminate among our people misconceptions and false appraisals of the situation.

IV

WE ARE at the moment in a position where no overall political solution to our problem is in sight. Nevertheless, ought we, and can we, indicate the direction that we think such a solution should take? Would this in itself bring us further along the path to a solution? My answer to these questions is in the affirmative. It is indeed our duty to give an

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ideological reply expressing the viewpoints acceptable to us.

We have to state openly that we recognize the Palestinian Arab people and its right to achieve nationhood within the framework of a peace settlement with us, while safeguarding our own vital interests. In other words, I am advocating a *Palestinian Solution.* But let me first define the meaning I assign to that term. I do not, of course, mean setting up a Palestinian state instead of the State of Israel, but a Palestinian Arab state side by side with Israel. I also maintain that such a state cannot establish itself on the West Bank of the Jordan only, but must extend to the East Bank as well. I also make a clear distinction between the announcement of support for the Palestinian Solution and the execution of the plan in practice. Its implementation cannot come about solely as the result of proclamations on our part. Indeed, it must needs be a protracted process and must be based on positive day-to-day activity in the area concerned, and its success is conditional upon the Arabs' agreement.

Here I should like to add a word about the nature of that activity. For several years a positive and practical course has been pursued by those administering the occupied territories. This has taken the form of agricultural guidance, the promotion of economic development and marketing of goods, and wise and tactful behavior (in most cases) on the part of the representatives of the military government *vis-à-vis* the heads of the religious institutions. The proclamation of support for a Palestinian Solution would not be a substitute for positive and practical activity in the areas concerned: its intention is to offer *a conception that would give that activity direction and meaning.*

In order to sharpen and emphasize the distinction between a demonstrative proclamation of support for the Palestinian Solution and the implementation of that idea, let me state one of the difficulties besetting its path. The leading Arabs of Jerusalem and Nablus today most definitely dissociate themselves from the solution I have outlined. It is maintained in some quarters that their attitude is caused by the fact that during the first few months after the Six-Day War the Israeli government evinced no real interest in the Palestinian option. But my own view is that there are intrinsic reasons for their reluctant attitude bound up with the social character of this particular leadership. For these Arab notables, members of the great families of Nablus and Jerusalem, not only find it hard to emancipate themselves from the myth of Arab glory, but maintain close connections with the capitals of the Arab countries. It is the members of the notable families, who, above all, have concrete ties with the Arab world at large—in the shape of financial investments, trade connections, and relatives in high government posts. As a rule the paths of their own individual careers lie through various Arab capitals. Their links with the Arab world as a whole are even stronger and more involved than they seem, since they extend over many generations. As long ago as the days of Ottoman rule, members of these families occupied government posts, and their sons were sent to fulfill religious and judicial functions in the Arab-populated territories of the Ottoman Empire. They also formed many ties through marriage outside Palestine. Hence these leaders and notables find it very hard to choose a course that would be bound to arouse fierce opposition in the Arab capitals.

V

OBVIOUSLY, at this stage the Palestinian Solution can only be a statement of intentions rather than operational policy. Nevertheless, the very fact of its being put forward at this juncture can be of value from several points of view.

The call for a Palestinian Solution, based as it is upon the principle of partition, presents a challenge to the anti-Israel ideology now prevailing among the Arabs. As against the Arab ideology, which maintains that the Arabs have to be prepared to make any sacrifice—that this is their war of "no alternative"—we have to offer an alternative, a possibility of achieving a solution.

There are those in our midst who object to the Palestinian idea and claim that, as the Fath vehemently reject this kind of Palestinian Solution, it is foredoomed to failure. But the contrary is true. The Fath are indeed strongly opposed to the idea, because it represents the possibility of a solution that is not in accordance with their aims. They and other Arab factors are afraid that it may gain acceptance amongst the Arabs. We can only hope that the Fath's apprehensions are not groundless. For that very reason it is worth our while to present this idea publicly. There is, of course, no guarantee that it will come to fruition. Nevertheless, the very fact that we proclaim the existence of such an option will immediately provide us with certain advantages in our war against the terrorists' influence in the occupied areas.

The military government in the occupied areas

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acts on the basis of certain simple and sound principles. These comprise fair and, as far as possible, humane behavior, and thus hold out a helping hand to the inhabitants in solving their everyday problems. At the same time firmness is shown in seeking out the terrorists and punishing those who assist them. It is a known fact that the terrorist organizations make use of threats and acts of violence in order to coerce the inhabitants of the occupied areas into helping them and to overcome their reluctance to cooperate. The latter are therefore confronted presumably with the dilemma of choosing between the lesser of evils: obeying the terrorists or the Israeli authorities. But in reality the two horns of the dilemma are by no means equally balanced. The Arab who, under pressure of threats, agrees to cooperate with the Fath is not merely submitting to fear: he can see his action as a response to the call of Arab nationalism. Hence when we demand of him that he desist from cooperating with the terrorists, we should also give him an opportunity to say to himself or his sons: "I refuse to aid the terrorists, not because I am afraid of the Jews, but because the risk is neither worthwhile nor necessary; for there is another honorable national way open to me." Hence the above-mentioned principles applied by the military government, though morally justified, and indeed necessary, are nevertheless *insufficient*.

An Israeli publication of the proposed Palestinian Solution may strengthen the international legitimization of our cause and help in creating a more favorable climate of public opinion toward us. This advantage accruing from the proposed Palestinian Solution is by no means its primary justification; nevertheless, this is an aspect that should not be lightly overlooked.

First and foremost, however, the Palestinian Solution should be considered from the Jewish point of view itself. We have to reaffirm to ourselves that Zionism does not necessarily lead to the destruction of another people. The principle of partition, which has been accepted by the majority of the Zionist movement, is a moral principle. It is moral for the reason that it points the way to realize the national aspirations of both peoples through mutual concessions and by not being altogether unjust to either. The Arabs maintain that we agreed to partition at the time because we were prepared to divide up property that was not in our possession; whereas now that it is actually in our hands, we are no longer prepared to give up a square inch of it. We have to reaffirm that we recognize that each of the two parties involved has a share in this country.

The value of the Palestinian Solution from the Jewish point of view is that we shall not assume the distorted image that our enemies attribute to us. We must reserve to ourselves the right to determine the aims of Zionism, and not leave it to Yasir Arafat to define them.

Occasionally we hear in our midst voices saying that even theoretically, as a matter of ideology, no solution-by-agreement to the conflict is possible. Some Israelis go so far as to say that the Arabs are in fact right in their contention that Zionism is founded upon dispossession, but that for us it is necessary to our very existence. According to this view, our will to survive as a nation is held up against the Arab position, which is allegedly based on a claim for justice.Hence it would seem to follow that the Arab case is not to be condemned in principle on moral grounds. But this view is mistaken. The Arab position, which rejects partition, is indeed immoral. For whoever claims rights for himself must be ready to acknowledge the rights of others: by failing to do so he undermines the moral basis of his claim.

The very fact that we are able to put forward the possibility of a solution, therefore, has the greatest relevance for us concerning the way we see ourselves and the view we take of the validity of our arguments against the Arab charges. Anyone who is at all familiar with current trends among our adolescent youth will realize that to propound the possibility of a solution that is essentially Zionist and at the same time has universal moral validity is a vital necessity for education. Those who say that there is no solution whatever and maintain that all that is involved is power adopt attitudes that are educationally ruinous. Indeed, they may lead to despair and cynicism. The proposed Palestinian Solution furnishes our war with a positive goal. True, it may appear a long way off, perhaps almost utopian; but it should not be rejected on that account. To borrow the traditional words of the Jewish sages of old: we are not required to complete the task, but neither are we free to desist from it. □

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Lewis Coser

Spain on the Eve

This report was completed in the middle of June and is based on a visit to Spain in May and early June. Early in July, the King dismissed the previous Prime Minister, and the new Prime Minister's cabinet did not include Señor Fraga and other key reformists whose orientation I discuss. Rather than to rewrite the report, I prefer to let it stand as is, and have added a postscript assessing the new situation.—L.C.

When Señor Manuel Fraga Iribarne, then the Minister of the Interior, intellectual fountainhead and strongman of the Spanish government's "reformist" wing, received me in his office, I could not fail to note the huge portrait of the young King over his desk. As I left I passed in his antechamber, though in a much less conspicuous place, a smaller photograph of Franco. This might well symbolize the present political climate in Spain. The reform tendencies are fairly evident. The official reformist spokesmen proclaim over and over that Spain will now enter an era of democracy, yet Franco's authoritarian heritage, like a huge mortgage, still weighs down all attempts at reform.

A few preliminary observations: Spain is no longer the backward, largely agricultural country of the pre-Civil War republic or the first two decades of Franco's regime. The proportion of the active population in agriculture fell from 42 percent in 1960 to 25 percent in 1971. Urbanization was rapid and extensive. In 1960 only 19.1 percent of the population lived in cities of over 100,000; by 1965 this percentage had risen to 32.7 percent, and it is now higher than that in Sweden. In 1936 Madrid had a population of 1 million; it now has 4 million.

A completely new Madrid has emerged in the north of the ancient capital where there were only wheatfields 20 years ago. Now glittering high-rise commercial and apartment buildings dominate the skyline there, and I have never seen as many sumptuous bank buildings as in this area of the city. By the way, neither there nor anywhere else in the city do you find the shoeshine boys who used to dominate the street scene; they have all been replaced by machines. I cannot help but attribute some symbolic significance to this fact of economic development.

The Spanish middle class, which had very little specific weight during the years of the Republic, has now expanded considerably. In the pre-Franco era only Catalonia and the Basque country had enough of a middle class to count as a major element in the political and social balance; now this class is a major factor in all of Spain. Even more important, instead of an urban industrial working class

I wish to thank Professor José M. Maravall of the University of Madrid for the many important guidelines to the intricacies of Spanish politics he provided for me during my visit. I am also much in his debt for the insights provided by two of his papers: "Modernization, Authoritarianism, and the Growth of Working-Class Dissent: The Case of Spain," in *Government and Opposition*, Autumn 1973; and "Political Socialization and Political Dissent: Spanish Radical Students, 1955-1970," in *Sociology*, January 1976.

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still largely tied to its rural roots, Spain now has a huge industrial labor force similar to that of older industrial countries. The annual growth of per capita income between 1960 and 1966 was 7.5 percent.

Some of the fruits of the amazing industrial growth of the '60s have seeped down to that working class. In the countryside too there has been considerable improvement, not because of agrarian reforms, but because the exodus of the rural population to the cities and to Western Europe has led to a relative scarcity of manpower, which has forced landowners to increase wages in order to attract labor. Just as the Black Death of the Middle Ages changed the rural social structure through the resulting labor shortage, so emigration and huge population movements into the growing cities raised the price that those remaining in the countryside could command.

As a result, the political scene is now also fundamentally different from that of pre-Franco days. Anarchism seems to have almost disappeared and is no longer a major political force. This means that any future democratic regime would no longer have to reckon with the heavy liability of a significant part of the population refusing to participate in the country's democratic and parliamentary political process. In addition, the new middle class now can provide a solid base for parties of the center, be they of Christian Democratic or anticlerical liberal coloration, and the labor movement too has a considerably enlarged social base from which to operate. There now is a solid structural foundation for a democratic regime with a left-of-center welfare-state orientation based on the working class and the new middle class. But whether and when such a development comes to pass depends on a number of specific political developments.

Ever since the beginning of the rapid industrial upsurge of the late '50s and early '60s, it has been apparent that the creaky structure of Franco's authoritarian state was no longer able to hold in check the new forces released by this industrial development, and that the old institutional framework could no longer cope with modernization and development. Socioeconomic imbalances and deep-seated strains and fissures developed rapidly, for the Franco regime proved unable to synchronize economic growth and political immobility.

Franco's "Organic State," with its corporatist structure and its vertical syndicates encompassing workers and management in a single organization under the overall guidance of the government, had corresponded, to some degree, to a relatively stagnant economy, autarchic in orientation. The rapid economic development of the late '50s and the '60s—largely put in motion by new technocratic elements in management who wished to develop mass production and hankered after export outlets and integration into the Common Market—could no longer be contained within the authoritarian framework of the old regime.

The new working class, slowly realizing its increasing specific weight, was no longer willing to put up with an industrial structure that precluded collective bargaining and the right to strike. Workers now were no longer willing to let wages and working conditions be dictated by the Ministry of Labor's official regulations and so began to turn to illegal industrial action. The regime at first showed a measure of flexibility. By the late '50s, collective bargaining was again legalized. The regime also allowed the creation of *jurados de empresa,* a form of shop-steward committees, on the factory level. But this controlled institutional change soon proved unable to stay the wave of industrial grievance and discontent. The shop-floor representations progressively undermined the official, government-controlled, vertical trade unions, and from 1962 on new militant working-class leaders, emerging from the shop-steward committees, organized strike movements and other industrial actions that progressively undermined these official labor organizations. Thus institutions created by the regime in order to alleviate tensions helped amplify

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them. Even the employers turned increasingly to the workers' grass-roots organizations, since these—rather than the official unions that were largely empty shells—could serve as effective counterparts in collective-bargaining negotiations.

There were still some remnants of the old socialist and anarchist union organizations as well as of other clandestine Communist-supported unions in the '50s and early '60s, but not until 1962 was the Spanish labor movement truly reborn. Throughout the early part of that year, large strike movements developed in the metallurgical, coal-mining, chemical, ship-building, and electrical industries of Catalonia, the Basque country, and the other industrial regions of Spain, culminating in a general strike in the Asturia mines that lasted from July to September of that year. These large-scale industrial conflicts made it impossible for the regime to continue to define strikes as acts of sedition, cleared the way for the legalization of "professional" strikes and resulted in a cumbersome mechanism for compulsory arbitration and mediation set up by the Ministry of Labor.

1962 was also the year the most important new autonomous working-class organizations of the Franco era, the Commissiones Obreras (workers commissions), were formed—semilegal organizations, based on the legal shop-stewards committees and also on underground organizations. Soon the Commissiones Obreras took the lead in industrial conflicts and collective bargaining. They were joined by workers with a variety of political orientations, but the Communists clearly were predominant among them, and from then on the Commissiones Obreras constituted the major basis for the Communist party's political activity. The Commissiones attempted with considerable success to build an autonomous union movement, making use of lower ranks in the official unions and of the shop-steward movement in order to build a grass-roots alternative to the official unions. Linking political demands for democracy and autonomy with concrete claims and negotiations on the shop floor, the Commissiones Obreras have ever since been the decisive element in the workers' struggle, not only against management but against the regime as a whole.

In the last years of Franco's regime, the government's policies on the industrial scene were characteristically vacillating. At first, the Commissiones Obreras were granted a degree of recognition, but soon repression was intensified. After 1968, the government's tough line prevailed; the Supreme Court pronounced the Commissiones illegal and put an end to their quasipublic activities. At this time also, internal dissension became noticeable within the Commissiones. The Communist party now was pushing for a more pronounced political role, while non-Communist militants put the major emphasis on the shop-floor level. Yet despite government repression and these internal struggles, the Commissiones Obreras remain to this day the most important grass-roots organization of the working class. The Commissiones' top leadership is clearly tied to the Communist party, yet the CP has not succeeded in gaining full control among them. In a number of strikes in the most recent period, non-Communist leaders have spontaneously risen on local levels whenever it was felt that the Communists were more concerned with overall political strategy than with concrete, immediate gains.

Next to the industrial scene, the other major source of active dissent and concrete action against the regime from the late '50s onward was the university. Since the story of the students revolt is better known in the United States than that of the working-class movement, it will suffice here to say that the Spanish student movement, which emerged in the mid-'50s after over 15 years of almost complete conformism in the universities, encompassed within a few years a major part, probably the majority, of the students. Large-scale demonstrations in the late '50s were followed in the early '60s by the creation of

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clandestine organizations involving large numbers of students. These organizations soon infiltrated official student and faculty bodies, turning them into platforms for the opposition.

In 1965 a new organization of students, the Sindicato Democratico de Estudiantes, was set up as a kind of counterpart of the Commissiones Obreras. For a few years thereafter recruitment into the democratic student movement was carried on quite openly. But when its demands became less "professional" and more overtly political, repression again was intensified. Between 1968 and 1970 the government declared three states of emergency during which the police occupied the faculty buildings, dismissed professors, and arrested student leaders and other militants. In the meantime sharp internal dissensions had developed within the student syndicate; the initial leading role of the Communist party now was being aggressively questioned by a variety of ultraleft splinter groups ranging from Maoists to Trotskyists to anarchists. The student syndicate was dissolved in 1969, but student opposition movements of various shades continue to dominate the universities and keep them in a perpetual state of political agitation and antiregime activities.

A visit to the campus of the University of Madrid gave me a strong impression of *déja vu*. Not only the general student culture, but the kinds of books sold in the bookstore, ranging from Marxist classics to New Left thinkers from Marcuse to Poulantsas, from Gramsci to Habermas and Althusser, remind one of home. The bulletin boards announcing meetings, from the women's liberation front to a bewildering variety of revolutionary groups, are reminiscent of the American campus in the late '60s. There was even an announcement of a forthcoming lecture by the Socialist Workers party candidate for president of the United States, who must have thought that he would get a better audience among the students of Madrid than the workers of Detroit.

During the last decade of Franco's regime, the working-class movement and the students provided the major bases of antiregime organization, yet there also emerged large-scale opposition movements in Catalonia and the Basque country (in the latter, backed by a successful terrorist organization, the ETA). These movements were striving for regional autonomy and the removal of the oppressive hand of the central authorities as well as for general democratization. In addition, nuclei of opposition emerged among professors, journalists, liberal churchmen, and other professionals who openly began to question the legitimacy of the regime and strove for basic democratization. In contradistinction to the working-class and student sources of dissent, these largely professional middle-class strata were less inclined to follow the lead of the Communist party and strove instead to develop the bases for Socialist or Christian Democratic welfare-state politics.

After Franco's death last November, the Law of Succession that he had put onto the statute books allowed a smooth transition to the new monarchical regime headed by the young King Juan Carlos, who had been carefully groomed to continue the regime. By the laws of dynastic succession not Juan Carlos but his father, Juan, who lives in exile in Portugal, should have assumed the throne. But the old pretender was much too liberal to lend himself to Franco's entreaties, though he did not oppose, while still maintaining his dynastic rights, his son's assumption to the throne.

This succession allows a first glimpse at the many paradoxes that mark the Spanish scene. The Spanish Bourbons do not wish to emulate their French cousins of the 19th century who, upon their return from exile after the fall of Napoleon, were said to have learned nothing and forgotten nothing: the Spanish Bourbons want to push for a large measure of democratization. The old pretender, however, largely influenced by Christian Democratic advisers, is considerably to the left of the young King, who in turn is to the left of the

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prime minister he has inherited from Franco. Señor Fraga, the minister of the interior, in turn is much more inclined to reform than the prime minister under whom he serves. The present government is made up of a motley crew, some ministers belonging to the camp of diehards the Spanish call the Bunker, others having ties to the major industrial interests, and still others are taking Fraga's lead and working toward a kind of "managed" democratic solution that seems largely to coincide with the wishes of the young King.

Señor Fraga is an impressive figure, surely the dominating personality in the present regime. He is a brilliant intellectual of lower-middle-class origins, a former professor of political science at the University of Madrid, the author of many books, a former minister of information in the '60s under Franco. Fraga exudes self-confidence and dynamic energies, and he obviously loves the smell of power. "Ortega y Gasset," he told me, "once wrote a famous essay in which he argued that one could be an intellectual or a politician, but never both. I am here to disprove this contention." His reform plans, which he has so far succeeded, though with modification, in imposing on the government, involve a precise time table.

> I conceive of the ways to democratization [he told me] in terms of six-month blocks of time. During the first six-month period that has now gone by, we established a dialogue with the various political tendencies and the opposition, and elaborated projects for the fundamental restructuring of the basic laws governing political parties, the right of assembly, elections to parliament and the like. During the next six months we shall have these constitutional revisions adopted by the Cortez, and we will hold a referendum that will endorse the new democratic regime. Finally, elections to the Cortez will be held during the third six-month period.

It all sounds very convincing, very methodical, and very efficient. But will it work? One gets the impression that Fraga—who seems to pride himself on his manipulative skills, his Machiavellian ability to play both ends against the middle—thinks, in the last analysis, in rather too mechanical terms. While a master of what he likes to call the "politics of the possible," he seems to be not sufficiently aware of the moral and intellectual passions that mark a major part of the human equation, perhaps even more pronouncedly in Spain than elsewhere. If it is generally difficult, as one of the grand old men of Spanish socialism, Professor Enrique Tierno, once put it, "for antidemocrats to create democracy," it seems even more difficult for a man who seems temperamentally unsuited by his ingrained authoritarian bent to engage in the required politics of give and take.

Fraga's attitude on democratic political parties seems to resemble that of the Spanish police to prostitution: these are inherently rather disgusting phenomena, but, people being what they are, it is preferable to allow them a legal existence under drastic controls rather than letting them fester underground.

Let me give a few examples of the kind of controlled democracy that the laws now being passed would allow. The new law governing the right of assembly, it turns out, is hedged around with restrictions that make it almost meaningless. The police must be informed 72 hours in advance before any meeting in a public hall can be held, and the police must be informed ten days in advance of any open air meetings. The police must be appraised of, among others, the object of the meeting, its length, the agenda, the names and addresses of those who are calling the meeting and intend running it. The meeting will be authorized only if, among other conditions, it is judged not to have "illicit or indeterminate (*indeterminado*) aims," and only if the police are satisfied that "the meeting will not lead to infringements on the penal laws." In addition, the police must be persuaded that none of the organizers, speakers, and leaders of the meeting have been condemned for previous participation in "nonpacific" meetings, and that public order and traffic on public streets will not be perturbed.

It stands to reason that such a law will allow the police almost complete leeway to do as

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they please. A leading opposition journalist said to me that the current situation, in which permission to hold or forbid meetings is at the discretion of various central, regional, and municipal authorities, is preferable to a situation that will no longer leave a certain amount of discretion up to the police but imposes rigid legal criteria that can no longer be circumvented.

The fundamental law permitting all parties (except the Communists) to have a legal existence is similarly hedged around with so many conditions and restrictions that it is hard to conceive how such parties could maintain their autonomy.

True, a first chamber of the parliament, the Cortez, will be elected by universal suffrage if the present reforms are enacted, but a second chamber will be constituted, as the present Cortez is, of members of various "corporations," from trade unions to management, from university rectors to pharmacists' representatives. Moreover, the first chamber will be almost entirely restricted to passing on the budget, whereas both chambers will have to concur on everything else. The Prime Minister will not be responsible to parliament and will be nominated by the King and chosen from a list submitted to him by the Council of the Realm, a body of ancient holdovers from Franco's regime. One can well understand why the opposition so far has categorically rejected this bundle of reforms, and why it has stated that, if these new laws are railroaded through the Cortez while the opposition platform is not even considered, they will advocate a complete "*ruptura*" between government and opposition. They will then advocate a nay vote on the constitutional referendum or, if nay votes are not allowed, mobilize the opposition forces in favor of massive abstentions. (Journalists told me that an abstention rate of 20 percent could be taken in its stride by the government, but that an abstention rate of around 40 percent—which seems likely—would bring forth a governmental crisis or, perhaps, a crisis of the whole regime.)

Fraga and his followers are, of course, aware that the opposition, presently united in the Democratic Coordination movement, is sharply opposed to the present reforms. But they hope to split it and to induce the non-Communists to accept the projected constitutional arrangements in the hope of wider concessions later on. Though he emphatically denies it, Fraga plays a game of divide and rule when it comes to the opposition forces—favoring some and neglecting others, handing out permission to publish or to meet to certain political organizations while holding others in check, arresting some leaders one day, only to invite them to meet with him soon after their release. He plays cat and mouse with his adversaries, hoping to demoralize them and soften them up so that they will sign on the dotted line provided by government legislation. In our interview I expressed some doubt that the major non-Communist opposition parties will sign up with the government and thus accept its legitimacy. Fraga responded, with a contemptuous gesture, "They will rush to the office of registration the minute we open up the registration windows."

But will they?

The Democratic Coordination includes for the moment all major opposition forces: the Christian Democrats under the leadership of the old fox from pre-Franco days, Gil Robles, and of the highly respected law professor Ruiz-Gimenez; the reconstituted Spanish Socialist Workers party, led by the able and astute Filipe Gonzales (the exiled remnants of the old Socialist party will soon return but are unlikely to become a major political factor and with the Popular Socialist party, a socialist splinter group, will soon join a united party led by Gonzales); the various regional opposition parties; finally, the Communist party, under its Italian-style leader Santiago Carrillo, and the Commissiones Obreras, led by the powerful Communist leader Marcelino Camacho. There are also a variety of social democratic parties who advocate a kind of laborite, Swedish-style politics but seem to have relatively small followings. While some

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of their leaders, like the sociologist Gonzalez Seara who now directs the most important and lively opposition weekly *Cambio 16,* are respected left-wing politicians, others, like Garcia Lopez, seem to have rather close connections with American interests—and I don't mean American socialist interests.

All these opposition forces function for the time being in a kind of no man's land, a twilight zone not legal but no longer obviously illegal. Some of them are allowed to meet, while others will be arrested for "illegal" meetings. Writers of the opposition can express themselves in the press provided they do not transcend certain arbitrary limits set by the government.

Still, the first impression one gets of the Madrid press is one of almost complete freedom of expression. Such new dailies as *El Pais* or the mass-circulation weekly *Cambio 16* compare well with such distinguished European publications as *Le Monde* or *l'Express.* Yet the most important, predominantly socialist discussion magazine *Cuadernos Por El Dialogo,* which recently planned to carry a major report entitled "Terror in Spain," was told by the police that it would be seized and the editors brought before a military tribunal if they did not withdraw the report—they did!

As with the press, so with all other forms of opposition: they are neither legal nor formally illegal. The old socialist trade union movement, the UGT, was recently allowed to hold its first congress since the Civil War, which was attended by a number of trade union representatives from abroad as well as by foreign socialist leaders. The proceedings of the congress have been printed and can easily be obtained. The UGT now clearly has the government's approval: Minister of the Interior Fraga believes that, though the UGT still is relatively weak, it might in the future become a major competitor of the CP-dominated Commissiones Obreras. Even the anarchist CNT union was recently allowed to meet in congress in Madrid—obviously for very similar reasons. By contrast, the Commissiones Obreras will not be allowed to meet.

One of the respected right-wing socialist leaders, Antonia Gracia Trevijano, whom I intended to see, turned out to be in prison while a number of Communists such as Marcelino Camacho, the leader of the Commissiones Obreras, with whom Trevijano was arrested, had been released. Much of what now happens on the political scene has indeed a surrealist flavor, partly because the various authorities, now that they are no longer under the firm guidance of Franco, often fail to act in unison and follow individual whims and particularistic policies, but also because the regime plays the game of cat and mouse with considerable deliberation in order to soften up the opposition. The Spanish-American sociologist Juan Linz has created an apt neologism to characterize the present situation: political activities on the left are neither legal nor illegal, they are *a*legal, just as certain actions may be judged not to be moral or immoral but rather amoral. Such a situation can plainly not last for very long; the die will soon be cast one way or another.

What then is the present constellation of forces, and how will it develop in the near future?

Most knowledgeable observers maintain that, if free elections were held today, the Communist party would gather between 10 and 15 percent of the vote—roughly the same proportion as in the recent Portuguese elections. But the strength of the party cannot be assessed merely in terms of votes. As long as the CP is in control of the Commissiones Obreras and as long as the Socialist leadership of the UGT is not making major inroads in the Commissiones, the CP will have strong roots in the reborn labor movement as well as in other local organizations. Its adherents are devoted, disciplined, well-trained, and bathe in the glory of the long and sustained labor struggles they have led in the recent past. Though the following figures are by no means reliable, it seems reasonable to accept the estimate that the Commissiones have presently some 100,000 members (the CP claims that

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they have 1 million), while the UGT's membership is probably below 10,000, and the Christian union's below 5,000. These figures may change very rapidly once the UGT begins a serious recruitment campaign. The CP claims 150,000 members for itself and presently is conducting a membership drive to reach 300,000. While these figures are inflated (80,000 seems a more realistic figure), there is no reason to doubt that the CP now is the strongest among the opposition forces. Its main rival on the left, of course, is the Socialist Workers party (PSOE). I have no membership figures for the PSOE, but all observers agree that if free elections were held today, its share of the vote would be around 30 percent—again quite similar to the election results in Portugal.

Since the Christian Democrats are also quite well entrenched in the middle classes, and since the regional parties are likely to gain large majorities in their regions, it is reasonable to predict that the opposition would easily carry a majority if free elections were held today. But, of course, precisely for that reason there will be no free elections. A managed election according to the Fraga recipe might give very different results; the CP will not be recognized for the time being—although Fraga says vaguely that they might be recognized in another year or two.

Fraga's main political aim is, of course, to fragment the opposition, and I am not altogether sure that he will fail in this, although his chances are presently rather slim. It is hard to see how the non-Communist opposition could accept Fraga's present terms, and it has just now (June 3) affirmed its united rejection of Fraga's plans. Yet Filipe Gonzalez, the leader of the Socialists, has recently made some rather cryptic statements indicating that he might be amenable to some compromise. He is soon to see Fraga and will probably also be granted an audience with the King. Political rumors in Madrid have it that Socialist party representatives have informally contacted government officials to find out what subsidies would be flowing their way if they agreed to become a legal party with the right to financial support from the government in electoral battles. Besides, it is hardly a secret, despite various public statements, that the Socialist leadership is not kindly disposed toward its Communist counterpart. It still maintains that it will not break with its CP partner until there are free elections, but it may change its mind. There is also the possibility that the regime might be willing to buy off a loyal opposition with an offer of a few ministerial positions—though surely not with major ones. Nobody, by the way, predicts, in the foreseeable future, a Popular Front government in Spain or the CP's participation in government.

These same tensions between SP and CP also exist in the trade union sphere. The Communist leaders of the Commissiones Obreras aim toward a unified trade union movement, built upon their base in the Commissiones. They envisage unified local unions, though they are willing to concede representation for the different tendencies in the directive organs of industrial unions and the whole union confederation. The UGT/Socialist party leadership, on the other hand, argues for *parallel* unions: they envisage the Commissiones Obreras, the UGT, the Christian unions, and perhaps also the anarchist CNT linked by shared, concrete plans of action and programs of revendication. This divergent orientation is not merely the result of the UGT's fear of Communist domination on the local levels. A reconstituted, legal UGT could lay claim to its considerable old holdings, mainly in real estate but also in newspaper presses and the like, which were confiscated by the Franco regime. Such restitution of course would strengthen the clout of the organization considerably. There is also the question of what is to happen to the enormous fortune—real estate and various assets—amassed by the official vertical unions, which, in whole or in part, under new, more democratic conditions would have to be handed over to the legitimate unions.

But, at the moment, concrete discussions of these issues are premature. Nobody knows as

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yet whether major parts of the opposition will accept Fraga's proposals, though most serious observers think it unlikely. In fact, some well-informed, responsible journalists believe that Fraga will have to withdraw some of his "liberal" concessions under the renewed pressure of the right wing within the government and the army. These journalists argue that the reforms instituted so far have been accepted, although with distaste, by the right because they do not seriously threaten its vested interests. But the right-wing opposition will be strongly reinforced when it comes to reforms that attack the vested interests of all those who have links with the old regime. If truly democratic reforms should take place, about 15,000 employees in the official, sham unions would suddenly lose their jobs. If official journals now operating on government subsidies would be forced to close down, there would be hundreds of unemployed right-wing journalists. And, of course, large numbers of official dignitaries have been feeding at a public trough that would then be empty.

In his strongest statement so far, in the early days of June, Fraga called for a pact between government and opposition. He argued that both sides would have to accept "historical compromises and fundamental agreements," and that "the Spanish people do not want to become cannon fodder in another revolutionary experiment." But how can the left accept such compromises at a time when right-wing thugs are beating up leftist militants in front of opposition bookstores, and when oppositionists are reminded every day of the origins of the present regime by being forced to reside or work in streets named after Franco's Civil War generals and other such worthies? So far, only a few small towns have dared to rename their streets. How can leftists possibly trust a government that makes concessions one day but gives no guarantee that it may not again countermand them tomorrow? How can they rely on a government that refuses total amnesty and the return of all exiles, and continues to deny elementary democratic liberties that are taken for granted elsewhere? The British journals that carried Fraga's speech also printed the following items:

1. It was announced today that the prosecution has demanded a minimum sentence of 18 years for Señor Simon Sanchez Montero, who is awaiting trial on charges of belonging to the executive committee of the Spanish Communist Party. Señor Sanchez Montero was arrested after a meeting at one of Madrid's three universities earlier this year. He has been imprisoned twice before for his political activities—once in 1945 for 14 years and then in 1959 for 20 years.

2. The opposition leader Rafael Calvo Serer, returning from exile in Paris, was arrested at the airport. He faces a seven-year sentence for an article he published in *Le Monde* in 1971.

Granted that the government desperately wants to enter the Common Market and NATO as well as other international organizations from which Franco Spain was excluded, and that it therefore desires to end the beastly conduct that was the norm during Franco's regime. Granted that the government wishes to engage in an experiment of managed and controlled democracy—but it certainly will have to pay a much higher price for an accommodation with the opposition than it is so far willing to pay. You can corrupt and bribe some oppositionists some of the time, but you can hardly succeed in corrupting and bribing all of them all the time.

In late May, I watched the army's yearly Victory Parade in celebration of Franco's Civil War victory over the Republic. Some hardy souls have suggested that it might be a good idea to give this annual parade some new neutral name, such as Armed Forces Parade—but the regime, while calling for "historical compromises," so far has not been willing to make even this simple compromise. The reviewing stands for the top brass, the civilian and court officials were heavily protected by soldiers armed with submachine guns and by barbed wire. Not a good indication of a desire for national reconciliation! People lined the Paseo Castiliana, one of

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Madrid's major thoroughfares, four and five lines deep. But practically no one applauded as the tanks and armed carriers rode by and the jets roared overhead. The crowd wasn't overtly hostile either. Most of the faces in the crowd seemed rigid and frozen, they evidently made an effort to control their emotions and to be on their guard—a cautious habit acquired over the many years of Franco's rule. Someone who had watched the same type of people the night before at the bullfight exploding in emotional outbursts knew well that on this occasion the Madrilenos felt it not yet safe to discard their masks. (I hear though that the King was warmly applauded.) All along the reviewing stands newspaper vendors tried to peddle the Fascist newspaper *Arriba.* I watched one of them for half an hour—he sold a total of two copies. *Arriba,* by the way, sells some 3,000 copies a day in Madrid, and that includes the numerous official subscriptions. The liberal *El Pais,* by contrast, sells some 70,000 copies in Madrid, and the liberal-socialist weekly *Cambio 16* sells some 400,000 copies in all of Spain.

All accounts and public opinion polls indicate that oppositionist sentiment in Barcelona and the Basque country is considerably stronger even than in Madrid. Alas, poor Fraga, his chances are not very brilliant. How long will he be able to maintain his tightrope act, especially during a time of severe depression, high unemployment, and a rate of inflation (4.58 percent per month in May) that is among the highest in Europe?

On balance, it seems most likely that the bulk of the opposition will remain united, rejecting the regime's entreaties and opting for a long-range strategy that would take advantage of all the openings it can find, and hoping that after a period of militant opposition and autonomous action it will finally be able to impose its own terms on the regime. That would postpone the demise of the refurbished Old Regime; but that demise seems nevertheless inevitable. □

Postscript

August 20

MY EARLIER skeptical view of the chances of the Fraga orientation proved only too valid. Early in July, King Juan Carlos dismissed the cabinet headed by the Franco holdover Carlos Arias Navarro and appointed the 43-year-old Adolfo Suarez Gonzalez as prime minister. The new cabinet does not include Fraga or any of his cothinkers.

The roots of this major change are complex. The King was dissatisfied with Arias's reluctance to embark on a decisive reformist course and wished to see the government headed by a younger and more dynamic prime minister. But the man he chose is not a liberal but a long-time Francoist official who up till now oversaw the only legal party, the National Movement.

The deeper reasons for the King's choice are obscure, but it seems clear that the army had become worried by the increasingly liberal rhetoric in Fraga's camp in general and in particular by hints that the Communist party might be legalized in a year or two. Neither King Juan Carlos nor anybody else in present-day Spain can afford to neglect the desires of the army.

Neither Fraga nor his ally, Foreign Minister Areilza, were consulted or informed in advance of the change by the King, who seems intent to continue a reformist course, but one based on technocratic modernizers rather than on Machiavellian semiliberals. The new cabinet marks the return to a measure of power for the Roman Catholic lay organization Opus Dei, led by the technocrats that engineered Spain's economic expansion in the 1960s. These men are closely tied to major industrial and banking interests, notably the Banco Español de Credito, the largest in the country. These interests had become alarmed in recent months by the deteriorating economic situation and also by

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the thought that the Fraga wing might make too many concessions to the left. Señor Suarez, backed by the military and the technocrats though intending to pursue reform, wishes above all to maintain stability. He and his government will have to steer a middle course, just like his predecessors, but it seems likely that he will proceed with more caution and hesitation when it comes to the demands of the opposition. Suarez has enacted a large-scale amnesty, but it is still not certain who will be included. The Prime Minister has announced that he will revive the stalled program of reforms, but it is rather unclear how he will manage this, especially since the five former ministers closely associated with that program were excluded from the new cabinet.

The new government includes a number of skilled technicians but hardly any outstanding personalities capable of renewing the dialogue with the opposition. The new minister of the interior, Martin-Villa, had previously been in charge of the official sham vertical trade unions, and the new minister of finance, Carriles Galarrago, is a director of a large insurance company and associated with a chain of conservative Catholic newspapers. Such men seem hardly suited to inspire confidence in the opposition.

As I hinted in my original report, the Fraga wing has proved to be, as the English say, too clever by half. They offended the army as well as major financial and business interests, and they failed to convince the opposition to back them in exchange for meager concessions. The rather faceless men who now dominate the cabinet may attempt to revive the economy, but it is hard to believe that they will manage the smooth transition to controlled democracy that Fraga had planned. They are likely to temporize, to maneuver, and to postpone the day of reckoning as much as they can. There may still be a referendum later this year and elections next year, but the likelihood of this is now slimmer than it was previously. Even more unwilling than the previous government to make a clean break with the past, Señor Suarez's men may soon be faced with an explosive situation that technical experts are ill equipped to deal with. □

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Chandler Davidson

On "the Culture of Shiftlessness"

Since its formulation almost 20 years ago by Oscar Lewis, the concept of "the culture of poverty" has been at the vortex of controversy.[1] For some writers, it provides a key to the mystery of poverty. For others, it is merely an obfuscation that diverts us from the true causes of economic deprivation.

In its strongest version, the culture-of-poverty hypothesis states that a value system, or culture, which denigrates hard work, discipline, ambition, and the sacrifice of immediate gratification to future satisfaction, results in laziness. In turn, laziness causes poverty. Passed from parent to child, this culture is perpetuated from generation to generation. If the hypothesis is correct, one would expect to find that the culture of poverty is more widespread among the poor than the nonpoor, and that it accounts for the smaller amount of work performed by the poor relative to other classes.

Critics have usually tried to show either that the behavior of poor people is not a manifestation of a genuine culture or that their tendency to work less is a function of some aspect of the larger socioeconomic structure: racial discrimination, for example, or job scarcity. While there is merit in these arguments, they tacitly concede two crucial assumptions: first, that the values of this culture are more likely to be found among the poor; second, that the poor do indeed work less than the nonpoor. An examination of these two assumptions is my subject.

Is the culture of poverty peculiar to the poor? Curiously, a terminological fact has discouraged the issue from being raised. The term "culture of poverty" is inherently biased, for it presumes to answer, more or less by definition, the empirical question I am posing. It is a marriage of two distinct concepts: culture, referring to a set of values, and poverty, referring to a lack of monetary or material means. Once these two concepts are joined together in unholy matrimony, it is difficult to appreciate that the culture and the economic reality of poverty can vary independently of each other. It sounds odd, in other words, to ask if the poor are more likely to belong to the culture of poverty than the rich. It sounds rather like asking if French culture is more likely to be found among the French than the Chinese.

Lewis exacerbated the problem by confusing poverty with cultural traits he believed were associated with it—although he sometimes distinguished between them, as when he estimated that no more than one-third of the American poor belonged to the culture of poverty. Linking a cultural syndrome and poverty in a single descriptive term invites this confusion. And it virtually precludes asking whether the DuPont family in Delaware shares some of its values with the Martinez family in a San Juan slum.

The same objection applies to Edward Banfield's "lower-class culture," which refers to some of the same values. Like Lewis, Banfield is able at times to see that lower-class culture is distinct from the lower class. At one point in his book, *The Unheavenly City,* he writes: ". . . . one who is rich and a member of

[1]Oscar Lewis, *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* (New York: Basic Books, 1959).

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'the 400' may be lower-class. . . ." meaning that a rich person may belong to the lower-class culture.[2] But his unhappy choice of terms, just like Lewis's, makes it sound absurd to ask what proportion of the rich belong to the lower class.

A new term is required that leaves open the question whether the cultural values under consideration are more wide-spread among the poor. First, however, Lewis's definition of the culture must be narrowed sufficiently to render it plausible as an explanation of poverty. His famous list of 62 traits, which comprise the culture,[3] has rightly been criticized for its everything-including-the-kitchen-sink comprehensiveness—one that brings together a welter of disparate qualities having no inherent relations to one another. Banfield's concept is an improvement, in that it salvages from Lewis's cultural smorgasbord those elements that hang together and plausibly explain why people who belong to the lower-class culture are in fact poor. In Banfield's words:

> The lower-class individual lives from moment to moment . . . . Impulse governs his behavior, either because he cannot discipline himself to sacrifice a present for a future satisfaction or because he has no sense of the future. He is therefore radically improvident: whatever he cannot consume immediately he considers valueless. His bodily needs (especially for sex) and his taste for "action" take precedence over everything else—and certainly over any work routine. He works only as he must to stay alive, and drifts from one unskilled job to another, taking no interest in his work.

Ignoring the obvious fact that no one who was this "present-time oriented" could live more than a few days, one can agree with Banfield that impulsiveness, or radical improvidence, is a more plausible explanation of poverty than such of Lewis's traits as *machismo,* early initiation into sex, an impoverished sense of history, or hatred of the police. Surely one can bully his wife, flaunt the law, confuse Andrew with Henry Jackson, have sexual intercourse before the age of ten, and still possess the virtues that enable one to become wealthy, if not healthy, respectable, or wise.

I propose a term that not only does justice to the essence of the concept but is more pleasantly colloquial. For "culture of poverty" and "lower-class culture" I shall substitute "the culture of shiftlessness." Webster's *Third New International* defines shiftlessness as follows:

> 1. a. Lacking in ability or resourcefulness. . . .
> b. Lacking in ambition or incentive: IDLE, LAZY.
> 2. Marked by lack of ambition, energy, or purpose.

Shiftlessness, of course, has a derogatory connotation, just like the term it is meant to supplant. The difference is that it wears its bias on its sleeve instead of hiding it behind jargon. Even more important, it leaves open the question whether the attitudes it describes are peculiar to the poor. It does not sound odd (just impertinent) to inquire if the rich are shiftless.

The earlier question is now reformulated: Is the culture of shiftlessness more likely to be found among the poor than the nonpoor? Among students of poverty the answer would likely be yes. True, hardly anyone now argues that all the poor belong to it. Even Banfield, who sees the shiftless poor as a major source of America's urban problems, estimates that only 10 to 20 percent of families with incomes below the government-established poverty line are shiftless. Moreover, most poverty scholars would probably accept the contention of Hyman Rodman or Elliot Liebow that shiftlessness is a value system that some of the poor adopt *faute de mieux;* they do not subscribe to it wholeheartedly.[4] But few social

[2]Edward C. Banfield, *The Unheavenly City* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), p. 48.

[3]Oscar Lewis, "A Puerto Rican Boy," in Joseph C. Finney, ed., *Culture Change, Mental Health, and Poverty* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1969; reprinted in paper, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), pp. 149-54.

[4]Elliot Liebow, *Tally's Corner: A Study of Streetcorner Men* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967);

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scientists have seen fit to ask whether the culture actually is concentrated among the poor.

In a recent secondary analysis of sample survey data collected by the Texas Research Institute of Mental Sciences with the assistance of the National Opinion Research Center, Charles Gaitz and I tried to discover whether the attitudes toward work expressed by the poor, as classified by government standards, varied from those expressed by the nonpoor.[5] The data were drawn from a Houston sample. We limited our analysis to the 20- to 64-year-old age group, and controlled for the effects of both sex and ethnicity (black, Anglo, and Mexican American). Subjects were asked questions about intrinsic work motivation, commitment to "work and achievement" rewards, and "time orientation." No statistically significant differences were observed between the poor and nonpoor in any ethnic category. The ethnic minorities, on the average, expressed more support for work-oriented values than the Anglo majority. Our evidence, in other words, casts doubt on the view that the cultural *values* of shiftlessness are more common among poor people.

It was only in the course of our analysis of values, however, that the even more interesting question arose: Do the poor actually *work* less than the nonpoor, quite apart from their attitudes toward work? The phenomenon we were trying to explain by calling it the culture of shiftlessness, namely, the work differential between the poor and nonpoor, was itself suddenly in doubt. Yet the assumption that the poor work less is so ingrained in the sociology of poverty that it had not previously occurred to me to ask if there were any evidence to support it.

Historically, the idea of the shiftless poor has vied in the popular mind with that of the shiftless rich. In the work of Thorstein Veblen, for example, it was the rich who stood indicted as nonproducers. *The Theory of the Leisure Class* was an academic reflection of the widespread turn-of-the-century outrage at the socially subsidized shiftlessness of the wealthy of that day, symbolized by the extravagant potlatches of the Astors, the Vanderbilts, and the Harrimans. Today the rich are treated more gently. We are told that they are not leisured—that ours is a generation of the "busy rich," the hard-driving Nelson Rockefeller rich; and that right beneath them, nipping at their heels, are the ambitious middle classes who are equally ensnared in the toils of the Protestant ethic, fully deserving of every tax loophole, emolument, or "perq" that comes their way.

The most influential academic version of the busy rich was advanced by C. Wright Mills, who was as stern a critic of the American upper class as Veblen, although for different reasons. "Veblen's theory," wrote Mills in 1953, "is not 'The Theory of the Leisure Class.' It is *a* theory of a particular element of the upper classes in one period of the history of one nation." To the extent that Veblen's view still applies, Mills believed, it is to "the *nouveau riche* of the new corporate privileges. . . and of course among recent crops of 'Texas millionaires.'"

> The supposed shamefulness of labor (Mills wrote) on which many of Veblen's conceptions rest, does not square very well with the Puritan work ethic so characteristic of much of American life, including many upper-class elements. . . . But of course, there is and there has been a *working* upper class—in fact, a class of prodigiously active people.[6]

At the time this assertion was first made,

Hyman Rodman, "The Lower-class Value Stretch," *Social Forces*, 17 (Dec. 1963), pp. 205-15. 15.

[5]Chandler Davidson and Charles M. Gaitz, "Are the Poor Different?": A comparison of work behavior and attitudes among the urban poor and nonpoor." *Social Problems,* 22 (December, 1974), pp. 229-45.

[6]C. Wright Mills, "Introduction," in Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: New American Library, 1953), pp. xiv-xv.

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Mills offered no evidence, nor, in a sense, was there a need for it. Obviously many of the rich and near rich do work hard. But this is just as true for those at the foot of the social ladder. It is not whether they do or don't, but what percentage of the various classes work, and how much—questions requiring *comparisons* of the work habits of the classes.

Like the notion of the culture of poverty, however, the notion of work is loaded with class ideology. Mills correctly criticized Veblen for dismissing the business activity of the rich as nonwork because it was not socially productive labor. But now that the pendulum of blame has swung in the opposite direction, the bias operates against the poor: their labor is dismissed as nonwork on the same grounds, i.e., that it is less socially useful or less "functionally important." Such an argument is no more plausible than Veblen's.

Instead of measuring work in terms of social usefulness one might measure it in terms of energy expenditure . . . in which case there is the very real question of whether an hour spent in the boardroom or on the company jet entertaining clients is equal to an hour spent pouring concrete or roughnecking on a drilling rig.

Consider the following case. Lehman Brothers, the investment banking house, was instrumental last year in persuading Standard Oil of California to buy up some $300 million worth of new shares offered by Amax, Inc., to raise equity capital. To clinch the deal, executives from all three firms flew to San Francisco. In the words of a *Business Week* reporter:

> Glanville and MacGregor flew out in Amax's plane. Ball—who was in Vancouver—came down, and on the night of Memorial Day, over a six-hour dinner with Haynes and Bell in a private room of the Carnelian Room restaurant, on the 52nd floor of the Bank of America building, they put the deal together.

The problem is how to classify the activities of these busy executives, culminating in a six-hour repast in the Carnelian Room. Was it work? Or was it something else? The same problem is posed in the *New York Times* obituary of Charles Revson of Revlon: "Despite his interest in the social whirl, and the amount of time he spent aboard the *Ultima II*, the 257-foot, 1,200-ton yacht he bought from Daniel K. Ludwig, the multimillionaire shipbuilder, Mr. Revson never lost contact with his office."

For a sizable number of the affluent, the rather nebulous activity of "keeping in contact with the office" seems to be all that distinguishes their daily routine from leisure.

Compare the activities of the executive and professional classes with those of Walter Brown:

> Walter Brown, aged 40, is a coke oven worker at the Clairton, Pennsylvania, plant of the U.S. Steel Corporation. Mr. Brown wears wooden pallets under his shoes and a rubber mask for protection. He works all day on top of a battery of hot brick ovens, pulling off the heavy steel oven lids with a long iron bar and dumping in coal. As *The Wall Street Journal* has reported, his job "is hot, filthy, monotonous and dangerous. . .surrounded by thick acrid smoke. The bricks he walks range in temperature up to 180 degrees, and the steel lids up to 480 degrees. Walls of flame from surrounding ovens shoot over his head. There is no roof; when it rains or snows, it rains or snows on Walter Brown." Mr. Brown has worked at the mill for 18 years, seven on this same job. He inhales tar, methane, benzine, hydrogen sulfide, carbon monoxide, coal dust, coke dust, and particles of pure carbon. He has headaches. And he is ten times more likely to die of lung cancer than the average steelworker.[7]

The point is that work performed by the manual occupations—the "working class," after all—comes closer to the intuitive notion of work as a strenuous, exhausting, burdensome task than that performed by their social betters. It is an "energy intensive" activity; and if one measures work by the energy spent, then the laborer may outwork his boss even when putting in fewer hours.

Even so, the number of hours worked is the

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[7]Fred Harris, *The New Populism* (Berkeley: Thorp Springs Press, 1973), pp. 30-31.

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best single measure of work we have. (This is so because time units are easy to apply to any activity, and are more "objective" than, say, energy expenditure or productivity.) By this criterion, who works more? The evidence is skimpy. Government employment statistics indicate that the poor are more likely to be unemployed. But unemployment rates are calculated as a percentage of the labor force—those working or looking for work—and labor-force participation may vary by class. Fortunately, our above-mentioned Houston survey data contained information about the respondents' work habits, and enabled us to compare the poor and nonpoor irrespective of labor-force participation.

Our findings were that among men, the black and Anglo poor were less likely to be employed than the nonpoor (68 percent v. 86 percent for blacks; 53 percent v. 83 percent for Anglos), a matter of 18 and 30 points difference, respectively. Among Mexican-American men, 86 percent of the poor v. 91 percent of the nonpoor were employed: no statistically significant difference. Nor was there an appreciable difference, among employed men of all three groups, in the number of hours worked by the poor and the nonpoor. Among women, there was no significant difference by poverty status in hours of housework performed by either Mexican Americans or Anglos. Poverty-status black women put in more hours of housework than other black women—and more hours than nonpoor Anglo women. Moreover, when various kinds of activities besides employment in the narrow sense of full-time paid labor were lumped together—such as looking for work, and going to school—there was no significant difference between the poor and the nonpoor in any ethnic or sex category. Our findings therefore raise questions, not only about the allegedly unequal distribution of the culture of shiftlessness, but about the poor's tendency to work less. I am unaware of other studies with similar controls that compare the poor and nonpoor in this manner.

Comparisons between the rich and the nonrich are also sparse. Our Houston sample did not contain any rich people, as distinguished from middle-class respondents. Mills presented data on the "very rich" in *The Power Elite,* published in 1956. His sample consisted of three generations of the 90 or so reputedly richest people in the country in 1900, 1925, and 1950. Although Mills interpreted his findings as supporting his earlier contention that "the very rich in America are not an idle rich and never have been," it turns out that 26 percent of his 1950 group were, in his words, "rentiers and not much else." Moreover, the percentage of idle rich had increased from 14 percent in 1900 to 17 percent in 1925 and to 26 percent in 1950. Projecting the trend to 32 percent in 1975, we discover that the percentage of idle rich is the same as that of the idle black impoverished men in the Houston sample, and greater than the idle Mexican American impoverished men. But the comparison is shaky, not only because of the small sample size but because 70 percent of Mills's 1950 sample of the very rich were women. Nor did he tell us how many were of retirement age.

On the basis of this information, we can tentatively conclude that the poor have been unfairly singled out as the shiftless class. If the poor differ from the nonpoor, it would seem to be primarily in the amount of compensation those who work receive for their efforts, and in the amount of subsidies those who do not work—the disabled, the lazy, the very young and old and, of course, those who cannot find work—receive from society.

I am not denying that shiftlessness exists in some small but significant measure among the poor. My suggestion is simply that shiftlessness is fairly equally distributed among social classes, and hence cannot be used to explain income differences. But if this is true, what accounts for the continuing influence of the culture-of-poverty hypothesis? The answer is that it serves the ideological function of rationalizing the inequitable distribution of income in America. And, as is true with all

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genuine ideologies—deeply held world views that serve a group's interest—it influences the perception of the facts upon which the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis depends.

This can be illustrated in no better fashion than to recount a brief history of a woman whose life is enmeshed in the culture of shiftlessness. The subject is a female, age 47, who has been intensively studied over a period of years. I shall call her Willie Mae Smith, although that is a pseudonym.

Willie Mae comes from a highly disorganized family milieu. Her father, Buck, was pathologically unstable. He drank too much, and was a skirt-chaser and gambler. When he went broke during the Depression, his father-in-law had to bail him out, paying Buck's rent on condition that he straighten up. Unable to do so, Buck began fighting with Mary Ann, Willie Mae's mother. The couple separated, and then began to compete for the affections of their children, Willie Mae and her younger sister, Laura. Buck initially won out. He visited his daughters often, spoiled them shamelessly, and taught them his philosophy of playing "hard to get" to attract men.

Mary Ann's remarriage was a blow to him. The originally extroverted Buck became "tuned out." He drank heavily. Willie Mae, in the words of one observer, "was emotionally scarred by the events in her family situation."

As a young woman she held a job briefly, and then married Roosevelt, a man much like her father, with a reputation for sexual promiscuity. He, too, came from a family prone to violence and tragedy. Three siblings died violently, one was divorced, one was mentally retarded, and another's wife had psychiatric problems. A married brother had been implicated in the drowning death of a girl friend, but the police were never able to pin anything on him.

More than 20 years passed before Willie Mae got another job. "The first one had been fun," she said much later, "but toward the end I got tired. It taught me not to expect too much and not to take things for granted."

The marriage lasted ten years—much longer than one might have expected, given Roosevelt's sexual adventures, Willie Mae's compulsive spending on clothes and baubles for herself, and the fights that resulted. It was a decade punctuated by family crises. Her father, a pathetic drunk, finally died. Her sister, Laura, divorced and remarried, after having had a relationship with Jimmy, an older man whom Willie Mae was later to marry herself. Willie Mae conceived five children by Roosevelt, only two of whom are alive today. They were largely reared by others. Willie Mae's marriage ended abruptly when Roosevelt was shot to death on the street by a man who was thought to be deranged. She remained single for a while, but because of her looks and her image as a "man's woman," she had no lack of male attention. One person described her as "attracting men like honey does bees."

Her second husband was Jimmy, a divorced man whose scrapes with the law seemed to contribute to his sex appeal. Willie Mae had known him before Roosevelt's death. Rumor had it that her sister, Laura, had slept with Jimmy before Laura's first marriage broke up, and then again after she remarried. Jimmy had seen Willie Mae soon after Roosevelt was killed, and their relationship continued until their marriage, which was said to have infuriated Jimmy's favorite long-time girl friend, as well as a number of his more casual ones.

As Jimmy's wife, Willie Mae continued her life as a "party girl." Sometimes with Jimmy, sometimes without, she stayed up till dawn "painting the town." As this case history was being written in early 1974, there were signs that their marriage was on the rocks. They fought often. Jimmy's daughter by a previous marriage was said to hate Willie Mae, and this seemed to be dampening Jimmy's ardor for his wife.

To sum up, Willie Mae's life-style exemplifies many of the characteristics of the "culture of poverty." She has an aversion to work, even though she could get a job. She hates housework and child care. Her life has a random quality to it, as Willie Mae has no

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disciplined commitment to a life goal. She is the paradigm of the "present-time oriented" individual, sometimes justifying this by the pain and suffering she has endured. She compulsively spends money on clothes and adornments. Her kin networks are remarkable for their pathology—the involvement of their members in violence, drugs, divorce, illicit sex. The families tend to be large, and internal tensions often lead to deviance. Add to this a penchant for high living, the "dog" which is exhibited in the men, the pursuit of sex and alcohol and late-night adventure, and you have precisely that admixture of impulsiveness and irresponsibility that epitomizes a "lower-class culture."

It would hardly be surprising, therefore, if denizens of this culture were likely to be poor and to contribute more than their share to the social and economic problems that plague urban America. Yet the thumbnail sketch I have presented is relatively abstract, and if various other details are filled in, problems of interpretation arise. Most important is the fact that Willie Mae is not poor. She was born into a family of established wealth. Both of her husbands were even wealthier than her own family.

Willie Mae is the fictitious name of a well-known person. But aside from having altered her name and those of the other principals, I have taken no liberties, in the above "case history," with any of the known facts or published rumors about the life of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.[8] That is, I have taken no liberties except the one most commonly taken in sociological accounts of the poor: I have selected the facts to suit a predetermined interpretation of an individual, and I have used some loaded words to describe them. Students of poverty, going a step further, have built a one-sided case against an entire social class—the poor. The ideology of poverty influences the way sociologists see and describe the poor, even though the researcher is often unaware of it. But whether he is aware or not, his description serves the interest of the affluent, by justifying the present inequitable distribution of wealth and income. If the poor can be saddled with the responsibility for their poverty, and the public convinced that the poor are the sole carriers of the "disease" of shiftlessness, the goals of a full-employment economy and a guaranteed decent standard of living become pointless.

[8] I relied primarily upon Freda Kramer's *Jackie: A Truly Intimate Biography* (New York: Award Books, 1975).

The political use that is made of the image of the shiftless poor is illustrated in an incident that occurred during a vice-presidential visit to Houston in December of 1975. Nelson Rockefeller arrived propitiously on a day that enabled him to address the 26th annual dinner of the Houston Business and Professional Men's Club, an organization of black businessmen. The theme of his address that night was the virtue of hard work.

"I understand what it means to try to seek to achieve and produce through hard work and that's what builds America," Mr. Rockefeller told the black audience. "Basically," he went on, "those who really care, really want to do it, are going to do it through hard work." The Vice-President admitted that there were many, including himself, who did not have to work. "But when they find out the joys and satisfaction that comes through work," he said, "they do so and that's what built this country."

It is possible that Mr. Rockefeller simply seized upon the occasion of addressing a group of blacks to lecture them on the virtues of the industrious life, as any apostle of self-improvement would have done. More likely, his message was not really addressed to the black business leaders, but to the largely white middle-class readers of the next day's newspapers. In either case the implication of his message was the same. One does not lecture on virtue unless vice is suspected. His speech might have been entitled, "Lecturing the Colored and the Poor—or Their Ostensible Leaders—on the Virtues of Work, or How

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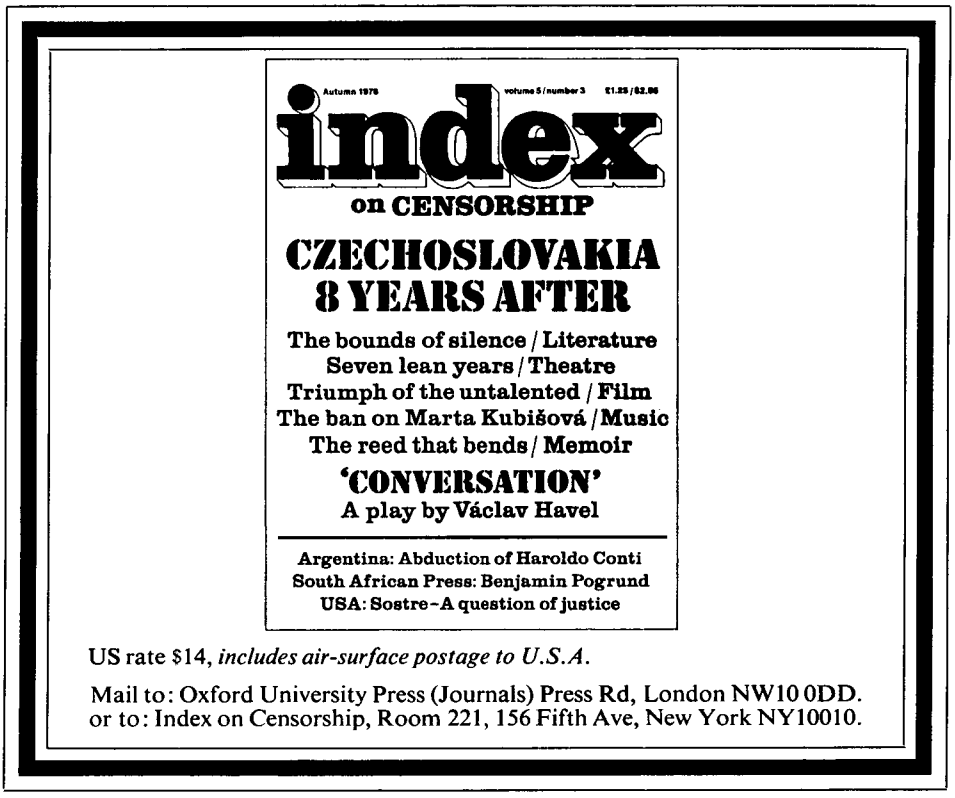
to Imply, without Actually Saying so, that They Wouldn't Take a Job if It Were Handed Them on a Silver Platter."

Hylan Lewis, an anthropologist and longtime student of poverty (not to be confused with the late Oscar Lewis), early on recognized the significance of social science's concentration on the so-called culture of poverty. "My own view," he wrote, "is that the most important research in this area now should focus not on the culture of poverty but on the culture of affluence—this is the culture that matters more and that is far more dangerous than the culture of poverty." He was right, I believe, but we have yet to see very many social scientists act on his suggestion and begin to make forays into the ghettos of affluence.

The reasons are obvious. The government and the private foundations are not about to fund academic probes into the bedrooms of Park Avenue, the boardrooms of Wall Street, or the cloakrooms of Congress, when the intent of the research is to study time orientation, ability to defer gratification, or machismo among the upper classes. Nor will the rich open up their lives as graciously or gullibly as the poor have done.

One can hope, however, that at least a few intrepid researchers will not be deterred by the funding problem. We are badly in need of a fresh, imaginative, and objective look at the patterns of work and leisure among the nonpoor, and especially the rich. When the evidence is in, I suspect that the poor will come off better than either the popular stereotype or the academic "poverty literature" has portrayed them. □



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Simon Leys

Broken Images

Conversations in Hong Kong

Simon Leys is the pen name of a distinguished scholar who teaches at an Australian university and specializes in Chinese painting and literature, subjects on which he has published five books and many articles. Under the pressure of circumstances, he has felt compelled to bear witness to what he directly experienced of Chinese contemporary society in two books published in France. One of these, Ombres Chinoises, *published in Paris in 1974, is scheduled to appear in an English translation under the auspices of the Viking Press. The following article has been condensed from a longer version that appeared in the French journal* Contrepoint.—Eds.

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images . . . .

T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*

In 1975, during a six-month stay in Hong Kong (a city I know somewhat since I have lived there for five years) I had the opportunity to talk informally and at length with various Chinese who recently left the People's Republic—some with valid exit visas, but a larger number having risked their lives to escape.

I am neither a China watcher nor a professional interviewer, and I did not solicit these meetings; they came about through the initiative of friends. In Hong Kong, people who have left China stick quite close together, for they have in common an indescribable experience that their new associates do not understand or are indifferent to. For the escapees, however, China remains a central concern; when they meet a foreigner who shares their painful obsession, they welcome him warmly, put themselves out to introduce him to other friends who, they think, will be better able than they to make him grasp what it is really all about.

In the course of these conversations, my new acquaintances and I often felt amazed at our luck. Here we were—they Chinese, I a foreigner—rambling on about daily life in China, pouring out our hearts. Only yesterday, our paths might well have crossed in China, but then we would have had to keep silent; or, had one of the standard visits to a factory or commune given me the opportunity to question them, they could have done no more than reel off the panegyric that one advisedly delivers for the benefit of foreigners. Some of my new friends' accounts did deal

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with contacts between Chinese and foreign visitors; they threw light on my own experiences while in China.

S—— is a student, born in Kwangchow.[1] He tells me about a friend of his who was studying English at Sun Yat-sen University. One day the young man was strolling through a large department store, and by chance came upon a foreigner who wanted to buy something and was struggling to make the clerk understand him. The student was glad to be helpful and also to test his command of English; he offered his services and in a matter of seconds solved the little communications problem. This done, he goes on his way but as he leaves the store, a Public Security agent (political police) accosts him and asks him to come along "for a little talk." He is detained at Public Security headquarters for the afternoon and subjected to an intense interrogation at the hands of several investigators who spell each other. They insist that he reconstruct for each of them in turn the precise tenor of the few remarks he has exchanged with the foreigner. They try to trip him into contradictions, to make him confess that it was no chance meeting, that he actually knew the foreigner. The hapless young man steadfastly insisted that he had never laid eyes on the foreigner before, that their conversation concerned nothing more than the purchase of six pairs of socks and a dozen handkerchiefs. After several hours, his firmness prevailed over the doggedness of his questioners, and they released him. There was no aftermath, but the student swore to himself that never again would he spontaneously speak to a foreigner.

P—— had been a worker in a big factory in Wuhan before he left China, late in 1974. He tells me about his matrimonial tribulations. Because he was the son of a former Kuomintang soldier, he would, as he came to discover, be branded for life. However, the consequences of his father's military service had not been immediately apparent, for initially the young man enjoyed one of the most enviable positions in the People's Republic—employment as a worker in an important enterprise in a large urban center. Things began to sour for him only when he fell in love with the daughter of the secretary of a local Party committee. The young woman reciprocated his feelings, and they decided to marry, at which point the Party put an end to that plan. It was not seemly, it was not conceivable that the son of a reactionary marry a "wellborn" young woman (*ch'u shen hao*; i.e., the child of a proletarian, of a poor or middling-poor peasant, of a revolutionary, or of a Party member). In the circumstances, first and foremost it behooved the young woman's father to prevent a marriage that, by allying his family with a politically tarnished individual, could have compromised his own advancement.

As a first step, the young woman was removed from the picture by being assigned a new job in a distant town. Unfortunately for the young man, he was stubborn: not only did he show himself incapable of seeing the situation sensibly, realistically, but he also had the impudence, bordering on madness, to invoke against the Party's paternalistic authority the famous Marriage Law of April 30, 1950, which guarantees an individual the free choice of a spouse. Needless to say, P——'s seditious attitude entailed appropriate punishment: he lost his excellent job, and found himself transferred to menial work and his wages cut by two-thirds. Since he still would not give up his foolish fancy, he was progressively reduced to the state of a pariah. This regime of starvation wages and ostracism lasted six years, at the end of which he confessed himself finally defeated, recognized the error of his ways, and renounced his pretentions. Whereupon the Party, whose solicitude embraces all, even the black sheep, did a touching thing: knowing in its wisdom that "it is not good that a man should be alone," on its own initiative undertook to present the repentant sinner with a mate. The woman in question was the exwife of a political prisoner (generally, when one spouse

[1]Chinese name of Canton.

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is arrested for a political crime, the other is firmly encouraged to request a divorce so as to "clearly indicate that he has put himself at safe remove" from the class enemy, *hua ch'ing chieh-hsien*). This marriage, therefore, in the best Chinese tradition constituted "a perfectly matched union" (*men tang hu tui*).

Dr. S—— is back from Shanghai, where she had gone to visit her mother. There is a wall in Shanghai reserved for posting documents having to do with the "Critique of Lin Piao and Confucius" movement. She tells me she saw on it a daring graffitto that changed the slogan "*p'i Lin p'i K'ung*"—"Critique of Lin [Piao], critique of Confucius"—into "*p'i ling p'i k'ung*—"Critique-zero, critique-nil." This bit of lapidary wordplay perhaps sums up best the skepticism with which the masses now react to watchwords issued by the authorities. There is a general disintegration in the labor force that is expressed in masked strikes and sabotage. Both P—— and F—— confirm that grave disorders did indeed upset transport and communications during the autumn of 1974 and for a moment threatened to paralyze the national economy. In the West, this crisis was not mentioned in those prestigious liberal newspapers (prominent among them *le Monde*) that feed their readers little else about China but orthodox Maoist propaganda. Nevertheless, it was widely discussed in scholarly publications by serious observers whose attention had been attracted at the time by a campaign orchestrated on a national scale "to galvanize and support the revolutionary enthusiasm of the workers in the transport sector." In all large cities and all communication centers, high-ranking members of the bureaucracy had repaired in a body to railway stations and docks where, under the eye of cameras, they had solemnly shouldered the boxes of ballots waiting to be collected. . . . About two months after these emergency maneuvers had been undertaken to appease the workers, the new constitution of the People's Republic appeared, which for the first time granted them the right to strike. For all that the concession was to remain entirely theoretical, it does make one understand better how grave the labor unrest was to have warranted its adoption—especially when one remembers that, in other respects, this same constitution suppressed most of the individual and civil rights guaranteed by the constitution of 1954.

At the root of the present troubles lies a profound discouragement, a moral depression. Systematic mendacity has rotted everything. It applies equally to the use of propaganda in politics and to the use of banknote plates in public finance; neither promises nor currency, when unbacked, could be continually issued without provoking a crisis. For a long time, workers accepted a sort of sacrifice, confident that their situation would be eventually improved; in actual fact, it has not changed for 20 years. The regime is reduced to invoking, for purposes of contrast, situations that prevailed more than a quarter-century ago. However, for people under 30—and today they constitute half of the country's population—this conjures up an abstract, almost mythical notion, and these images of a tragic past become stereotypes and clichés by dint of being ritually, mechanically repeated.

It is not so much their poverty that weighs on workers—their elders have known much worse!—but rather their sense of stagnation, of an absence of hope. Suicides are not rare among the young. P——, who used to live near a railroad track, speaks to me of how frequently despairing young people would come to throw themselves in front of trains. The vast enforced movement of youth from the cities to the countryside is the cause of many tragedies. The bitterest part of this is that, even if the policy does hit everyone without distinction, for the majority it means permanent exile, whereas young people "of good family" (*ch'u-shen hao*, which in this instance means exclusively the children of bureaucrats and influential Party members) manage after one or two years to return to the city "by the back door" (*tsou hou men*) and get themselves hired in lines of work that

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protect them against fresh deportation. "It is not the hard life that maddens us," P—— says, "it's the injustice."

Those who, like P——, choose to escape to Hong Kong are bartering the very real security the Maoist regime assures them for a totally uncertain future. In Hong Kong, generally they eat better than in China but often are worse housed; it is not easy for them to find employment, and they are always at the mercy of whatever illness or accident may, from one day to the next, deprive them of every means of subsistence. Actually, what above all else drives people to attempt escape is probably the irrepressible desire to be in charge of their own destiny, and the feeling that even if things do not work out well for them, at least the full range of the possible will be open to their children.

In order to explain certain aspects of the present regime, people have often emphasized the traditionally collective nature of Chinese life, in which the individual was never left on his own but, on the contrary, was constantly supported, influenced, ragged, guided—bound, in a word, by a close and complex network of family, clan, local, and other relationships. However, one must remember that these encroachments of the collectivity on the individual private life were always the actions of natural communities, and that insofar as possible these communities themselves lived free and independent; they protected their members by fiercely fending off government and bureaucratic interference. The bureaucracy itself strove to keep its intervention in clan and local affairs to a minimum; so long as public order was maintained and taxes were paid, it willingly left to the traditional communities the responsibility for policing themselves. (Zealous mandarins—the kind that produce a plethora of reports and dossiers—generally got bad marks in their administrative careers, whereas those who year after year never had any problem to bring to their superiors' attention were promised rapid advancement. Their very idleness testified to the good governance of the area under their administration, just as a doctor's leisure testifies to the good health of his patients.) In return, people struck a sort of tacit bargain: they were prepared to bear patiently the burden of heavy taxes and to support a parasite class of bureaucrats, and even the emperor himself and all his court, so long as officials refrained from intervening in their private affairs and respected the autonomy of their traditional way of life.

Today, the Maoist regime has not liberated the individual; it has merely substituted the all-encompassing authority of party and state for that of the earlier family and village collectivity—which was limited, after all, if only territorially. This new guardianship is no less invasive and tyrannical than the old family system; indeed, it appears more arbitrary, more intolerable because it is no longer imposed by one's own flesh and blood but by the most gigantic and monstrous of cold-blooded monsters.[2] So, if it is correct to say that the Chinese have long known authoritarian rule, it is also necessary to specify that for them the present state authoritarianism is without precedent and can thereby be a source of frustrations no less painful for the Chinese than for a people with a stronger tradition of individual freedoms.

Take the Lin Piao affair. How is one to explain the incredibly blatant lies in the official propaganda about it? After all, the government is not being run by idiots. There can be only one answer: Chinese leaders have only contempt for the Chinese masses.

More than 25 years ago, Victor Serge pointed out in his *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* that

> . . . the new methods employed to dominate the mind of the masses are those of large-scale commercial advertising with, added to its irrational basis, an element of insane violence. . . . Statements are made that carry an

[2]The sole recourse when the blind colossus of the Maoist bureaucracy inflicted some unendurable injustice used to be to write a letter to Chou En-lai. Usually, these letters went unanswered, but cases have been reported in which, after several years, the petitioner's grievance was redressed.

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overwhelming impact; they catch the average person by surprise. He cannot conceive that a lie on such a scale is possible [but] the brutality of it intimidates him and somehow makes the deception credible. Reeling under the shock, he is tempted to say that such violence must have a superior justification that passes his understanding. . . . Such tactics can succeed, obviously, only in troubled times and provided that courageous and critically minded minorities are gagged or reduced to impotence. . . . Totalitarianism has no more dangerous foe than a critical intelligence, and therefore works relentlessly to exterminate it.

M——, who is a teacher from Kwangchow, tells me that one never discusses politics with people one does not know well, or even with close friends if those friends belong to one's political unit; one speaks of political matters only with close friends who belong to other units. The reason: within the same unit, people always risk having mutually to accuse each other. Everyone prefers, therefore, not only to reveal as little as possible about himself to potential accusers but, above all, to know as little as possible about friends whom sooner or later he may be led to denounce. Ignorance makes it possible at least in good faith to confine these obligatory denunciations to a routine formality.

Regarding the polyvalent use of Mao Tse-tung's Thought: L——, a minor cadre from Hunan, has had a searing experience in this connection. According to him, you are invited to open your heart, invoking the fifth quotation from the 15th chapter of *The Little Red Book:*

> Anyone should be allowed to speak out, whoever he may be, so long as he is not a hostile element and does not make malicious attacks, and it does not matter if he says something wrong. Leaders at all levels have the duty to listen to others. Two principles must be observed: (1) Say all you know and say it without reserve; (2) Don't blame the speaker but take his words as a warning. Unless the principle of "Don't blame the speaker" is observed genuinely and not falsely, the result will not be "Say all you know and say it without reserve."[3]

When, thus encouraged, some simple soul has the audacity to speak his mind about his superiors or the policy of the moment, he is instantly pinned down on the authority of the 20th quotation from the second chapter:

> We still have to wage a protracted struggle against bourgeois ideology. It is wrong not to understand this and to give up ideological struggle. All erroneous ideas, all poisonous weeds, all ghosts and monsters, must be subjected to criticism; in no circumstance should they be allowed to spread unchecked.[4]

A visit from two young artists. We spend the whole day chatting—or, rather, I spend the day listening to the painters' stories. M——, 35, left China ten years ago with a legal exit visa to come see his father, who was living in Hong Kong. T——, 22, arrived here last year by swimming, after an earlier attempt had failed and had won him a stint in prison. M——is discriminating, reserved, delicate, and somewhat sickly; T—— is rough, truculent, and enormous—a force of Nature. In a way, the contrast between their two temperaments could symbolize and summarize the contrast between two generations separated by the experience of the Cultural Revolution. People who were saturated in that adventure as adolescents truly do seem to constitute another race of men, characterized by a mixture of almost brutal determination, cynicism, harshness, and fierce independence. I wish good luck to the bureaucrats whose job it will be to keep people of this caliber toeing the line!

M——, with his subtlety and courtesy, is in every respect a product of the traditional family upbringing that continued to mold new generations virtually up until the Cultural Revolution. T——, on the other hand, is the incarnation of a new human type, disabused and toughened by grueling experience. Paradoxically, it is his generation that is now

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[3] *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung;* English translation published by the Foreign Languages Press, Peking; reprinted by Bantam Books, New York, 1967, p. 90.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

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turning against its Creator Mao. In fact, it is on this score that young people are most clearly set apart from their elders. For the latter, even if they are refugees, even if they are opposed to the regime, the person of Mao preserves some intangible that elicits if not affection, then at least a sort of respect; but the children of the Cultural Revolution are savage orphans who at the end of their adventure burned the tribal totem.

During the '50s and early '60s, M—— had requested permission 11 times to rejoin his father in Hong Kong. He never received a reply, and finally was refused any more visa-application forms. Thereupon, he wrote, as did his father, directly to Chou En-lai. Sometime later, during a peak famine period, he suddenly received permission to leave China. He went first to Macao; from Macao, he smuggled his way to Hong Kong, availing himself of the China Travel Service, which at that time (I don't know what it is doing today) had turned the clandestine immigration to Hong Kong into one of its most lucrative second-string enterprises. In China, all avenues had been closed to M——; in spite of his brilliant performance at high-school level, admission to the university as well as to the School of Fine Arts had been denied him because of his middle-class background. Then, as a punitive measure, he had been dispatched to the fields: he was being censured for writing regularly to his father in Hong Kong.

Fifteen years after the event, images of the yearslong famine that followed the Great Leap Forward remain engraved in everyone's memory. In certain provinces—Anhwei, for example—so many people died of starvation that the countryside seemed depopulated. M—— relates how, around 1961-62, in the Shanghai region, a persistent rumor circulated among the people that any day Chiang Kai-shek was to arrive on the mainland. A very clear indication of the degree of despair to which hunger had reduced the population! T—— claims that the problem of hunger, although much less acute, still remains to some extent, even in theoretically prosperous areas like Kwangtung Province. In some regions, rationing permits the peasants to eat rice only on great occasions; in normal times, they must be satisfied with sweet potatoes and other substitutes. M—— recalls that in the days when he was working in the fields (before the great famine), he received meat only once a month. Invariably, it gave him diarrhea, for his stomach was no longer used to digesting such rich food.

T—— says he received his early literary and art education thanks to the pillaging during the Cultural Revolution. In his school, as everywhere else, there were giant bonfires of books from the library and from teachers' private libraries, as well as of books that had been confiscated in middle-class city homes. Stacks of books destined for the flames used to wait in school courtyards. At night, T—— and a few comrades would steal from their school's pile beat-up volumes that struck them as interesting, and then would swap their booty among themselves. He also describes how, in Shanghai, the house of the great painter Liu Hai-su was sacked; the artist's own work and his collection were burned. A single painting was saved. It was hanging, under glass, in the living room, and the elderly artist had the presence of mind to cover it with a large photograph of Mao.

T—— speaks, too, of the peculiar and very recent recrudescence of traditional superstitions, even in their most primitive and bizarre forms. (Very different sources also vouched for this. The woman doctor from Shanghai whom I quoted earlier mentioned the astonishing popularity enjoyed once more by the *Shao-ping ke*—a sort of Nostradamus that dates back to the Ming period. People recopy and pass it from hand to hand, hoping to decipher in its cabalistic cryptograms what the future reserves for them.)

A modern version of *The Tale of the Source of Peach Blossoms*[5]: T—— describes how he

[5] *T'ao hua yuan chi*, the celebrated work of T'ao Yuan-ming, in which a fisherman accidentally discovers a tiny village so totally cut off from the rest of the world that it

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was wandering alone in a wild, mountainous area of Kwangtung Province, sketching from nature. By chance, he came upon a hamlet of only three farms. A marriage was being celebrated in traditional style, and the inhabitants of the tiny, lost hamlet invited him to share their feast, which was abundant. Off the beaten track, nowhere to be found on any map, forgotten by the bureaucrats, the village lived in complete independence. People raised pigs and poultry, and burned off small plots of bush around them to farm in the primitive way. They had only a very dim notion of a People's Republic that impinged on life in the outside world. T—— still remembers how amazed he was not to find any portrait of Chairman Mao on their walls.

As I listen to them assess the future and the probability of eventual de-Maoization, I keep asking myself whether M—— and T——, as well as many other young Chinese in the same circumstances, are not tempted to extrapolate on the basis of too limited and personal experiences. T—— expects Mao to lose his standing with the masses more quickly than Stalin did in the U.S.S.R., yet at the same time he does not hide a fundamental pessimism. What he fears is that the Chinese people may in the end adjust to whatever regime and whatever leaders so long as things do not go too far and their masters allow them to glimpse the possibility of simple, modest survival.

To find Marxist thinkers, one must turn to the capitalist countries, or to Socialist countries that revolve culturally in their orbit. As Karel Van het Reve observed,

> It would be easy, I believe, to draw up an impressive list of well-known Marxists in the United States, France, Japan, Poland, England, Germany, and Yugoslavia. But could one put together an analogous list of Russian Marxists? . . . It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that there are more Marxists among university professors in Paris and Tokyo than in all of Russia.[6]

In the China of the People's Republic, the situation is even more paradoxical. Late in 1974, in Kwangchow, the Public Security took advantage of the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius to carry out a big cleanup: a list of death sentences for various offenders was posted on walls to serve as an example and warning to the citizenry. The gravest crime, ranking above the murders, armed robberies, and rapes that figured on this list, was that of three high-school students found guilty of having secretly organized "a study group of Marxist thought." In China today, Marxist ideas, dated as they are, still carry such revolutionary potential that the authorities cannot risk letting them be diffused except through strict Party control. For similar reasons, J. Pasqualini observes that in the camps inmates are forbidden to sing "The Internationale." "Arise, ye wretched of the earth" could be too inflammatory. (Jean Pasqualini, also known as Bao Ruo-Wang, a French national whose father was Corsican and mother Chinese, spent his first thirty-odd years in China, the last seven in prison camps. His book, *Prisoner of Mao*, co-authored with the American journalist Rudolph Chelminski [New York: Coward McCann & Geoghegan, 1973; French ed. *Prisonnier de Mao*, Paris: Gallimard, 1974], is a remarkable account of Communist China's prison system and life in that concentration-camp society.)

"A conqueror, you are made a baron; conquered, you are a mere felon." — Chinese proverb

Why are the traitors always the vanquished? Because when they are conquerors one dares no longer call them traitors. Thus it is that today in China the Revolution is perpetually victorious, just as it is mandatory that the Counterrevolution be regularly routed.

has preserved the customs and clothing of another age. *The Source of the Peach Blossoms* became the symbol par excellence of a world preserved on the verge of history, in simple, happy isolation.

[6] "La Russie non officielle: les dissidents et l'Occident," *Contrepoint*, no. 14, 1974.

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During an earlier visit to China, in 1972, I raised this objection with one of my guides while on a trip in the provinces. He was a lively, jovial young fellow, deeply committed to the regime, I believe, and for very apparent reasons. The son of a poor peasant, he—like one of his brothers and his sister—had been able to attend university and now was enjoying a privileged position in a large city. None of this would have been possible without Maoism, he pointed out to me, not irrelevantly. We had discussed the Lin Piao affair, the shock of which had not yet worn off, one year after the event. To put it more exactly, he had pumped me on the subject, while for his own part he had maintained a prudent reserve. I gave him a résumé of what was being said abroad about the affair, and told him how I personally interpreted it.

Having done my best to satisfy his curiosity, I thought it legitimate to feel him out in turn on this delicate terrain. I began by saying, "Since Lin Piao was defeated in the power struggle, today he must be tagged as a counterrevolutionary traitor. If he had won, on the other hand—technically, a perfectly conceivable hypothesis, given his position, his gifts, and the power he already held—just as inevitably Chou En-lai and company would pass today for being counterrevolutionary traitors. How are you ever able to decide whether your leaders at a given moment are orthodox revolutionaries or whether they are usurpers, since by definition they control all the organs of propaganda and hand out the certificates of good behavior or of treachery?" To him, the question seemed quite abstract and academic. "Well, if they were traitors, that would be found out sooner or later." "How so?" "It would just happen." "All right, I am supposing that the bandit and traitor Lin Piao has succeeded in seizing power and he has eliminated all his rivals. Every day, the press and the radio praise his virtues in chorus, his picture is displayed everywhere, walls are covered with posters declaring his to be the one correct line. But you, endowed with greater political perspicacity, you see through all that. Are you, on your own initiative, going to rise to your feet and, confronting the conformism of your familiars, the pressures of your superiors, and the authority of the Party—are you going to denounce the supreme leader of the moment as a traitor?" "I personally, perhaps not"—his frankness made me like him even more—"but other people certainly will, sooner or later." "What do you call sooner or later?" "Oh, you know, that kind of thing takes time—fifty, a hundred years . . . ."

China is the religion of the Chinese. (China is a cultural concept. It is not confined to a certain race or a certain territory or a certain government; of course, there does exist a China in the narrow nationalist sense of the term, but this notion, which developed only recently and chiefly under the influence of the West, does not concern us here.)

Because I know what Chinese culture means to them, I have often been amazed by the impassive serenity with which the majority of the elderly Chinese scholars whom I know witness from abroad the destruction of that culture. I was talking about this one day with one of them. He is a scholar, archeologist, aesthete, and a collector of worldwide fame, whose entire existence is nourished and justified *only* by this culture. He smiled at my naif ardor, and he said to me, "Look, my friend, don't get so overwrought. Chinese culture is indestructible." Like that—a quiet, matter-of-fact statement, to remind me of a commonsensical, self-evident truth. I think a Christian mystic would display the same equanimity while watching barbarian hordes transform St. Peter's into a stable, confident in himself and because of personal experience that such an episode, regrettable as it may be, involves no serious consequences since That alone which really counts dwells in him and could not be harmed in the slightest by this pathetic foolishness.

In China itself, on the contrary, the Cultural Revolution finally forced some eminent intellectuals to face up to the unthinkable. If Lao She, Fu Lei, and so many others have committed suicide, it is, I believe,

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because they had the brutal, unbearable revelation that perhaps *China, too, could be mortal.* Their despairing message seems not to have reached its destination.

The question of social background plays a preponderant role in the People's Republic; it is essential to be "of good family" (*ch'u shen hao*)—that is, son of a worker, a poor or middling-poor peasant, a soldier, or, best of all, an influential Party official. Only in the sciences and strategic industries (nuclear physics, aeronautics, etc.) are there exceptions to the rule whereby men of suspect origins but also of genius are permitted appropriate careers. In all other sectors it is practically impossible for an individual branded with "bad social origins," however gifted he may be, to reach a position that matches his aptitudes. The blind enforcement of this rule has led to an incredible waste of talent, and has caused the People's Republic to alienate an immense cohort of specialists. Such people, educated abroad in the most diverse disciplines, asked only to return to China to put their competencies at the service of their country. And heaven knows their abilities could have been put to profitable use. . . .

To cite only one example among many: A former colleague of mine, educated in England from the age of 15 and having earned a Ph.D. there, returned to live in Mao's China. He quite realized that his philosophy degrees would be of little use there but, with a certain amount of common sense, he calculated that his knowledge of English, which he spoke as if it were a second mother tongue, would at least allow him to offer his services as translator or interpreter or teacher. (China needs qualified linguists, especially in English, and is now endeavoring in every way to train as many as possible.) Unhappily, his social origins were "bad," and he has been employed for seven years as a truckdriver in Sinkiang.

In Hong Kong, among recent exiles the most vehemently bitter group is composed of people who were born in Hong Kong but returned to China in the '50s, in a burst of patriotic fervor. At that time, most were adolescents. They were discouraged by the materialism of the people around them, by the humiliation of being subject to a colonial regime, and were fired by the victory of the revolution in their mother country. They made a break with their families, their milieu, and with the dry rot, the slackness, and the compromises of the old world; in a proud affirmation of youthful freedom, they left for China. Twenty years later, here they are again. Some obtained a regular exit visa as Overseas Chinese, others escaped at the risk of their lives. One of the latter, who has asked the colonial administration that his status as a British subject be restored (he would like to get a passport and leave Hong Kong, to go as far away as possible, for he feels unsafe so near China), reminds me ironically . . . that when, with pride and heart high, he was about to cross the Lowu Bridge twenty years ago, in a gesture of juvenile theatricality he had torn his colonial identity card to shreds and thrown them in the face of the British policeman on duty at the entrance to the bridge. Their lack of information at the time they decided to go to China, and their romantic illusions, account for part of the disappointment, the disenchantment, and finally the despair that seized them later. However, underlying this despair there is a common denominator in their various destinies: all of them came up against the same unscalable wall of suspicion on the part of the Chinese authorities. Neither the sacrifices they had made in breaking away from family and home nor their unquestionable zeal—nothing ever was able to disarm the invincible distrust caused by their colonial bourgeois origins; they saw themselves condemned indefinitely to vegetate as semipariahs. The tragedy of this "original sin" is that it cannot be effaced. . . .

The corollary to the ban on all socially impure elements, notwithstanding the good will they demonstrate, is that "wellborn" people enjoy all the promotions. What proletarian Proust will describe for us the

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workings of this upside-down Jockey Club? As always, it is the offspring of Party bureaucrats, "the new class," who are the most insufferable. Their impudence and arrogance know no bounds, and all on their own they have managed to make a teacher's life a purgatory; in China today, there is no more wretched, thankless profession.

The systematic, total elimination of the middle class is justified in the eyes of the leaders of China by the need to consolidate the authority of "the new class" and prevent any danger of restoration of the earlier society. What is pathetic about the effort is that the *ghost* of a vanished bourgeoisie appears to the regime to be a still more redoubtable adversary; and, if one accepts the sure indications already evident in arts and letters, in culture, and in taste, that ghost threatens to survive, sardonic master of the field of battle. It is feckless to believe that by systematically placing only proletarians in all important positions one will be able to exorcise the influence of the bourgeoisie; actually, the opposite effect is produced. Bourgeois values, with all the attendant fetishes and especially the fripperies, attract their most ardent and pathetic followers from among people who have been deprived of them all their lives, whereas the bourgeoisie-born are more inclined to whisk a critical broom through the attics of their class.

> "On the basis of our constitution, the citizens of our country enjoy extensive democratic rights and freedoms." — Chou En-lai, "Report on the Work of the Government," *Jen-min jih-pao (People's Daily)*, June 27, 1957

Periodically totalitarianism pays homage to democracy by adopting a constitution. In 1954, the People's Republic was dowered with a constitution that should remain a masterpiece of the genre, second only to Stalin's, on which it draws for inspiration. It is all too easy to speak ironically of this document, pointing out that practically none of its articles was ever complied with, not even those having to do with simple procedure—for example, articles that established the periodicity of elections, sessions of the National Assembly, etc. One must not forget that this constitution had at least one virtue—so shining a virtue as in the end to seal its fate—and that was the merit of existing. As the abyss dividing constitutional fiction from political reality deepened, this document, which originally partook of innocent utopianism, little by little acquired a sort of subversive quality. In post-Cultural Revolution China, the slender little book became, in the government's view, a genuine time bomb sleeping in the shadows of libraries. Ergo, once and for all it must be defused (the precedent of dissenters' activities in the U.S.S.R., based on legalistic constitutional grounds, loomed as a stern warning).

Accordingly, on January 17, 1975, the People's Republic was provided with a new constitution stripped of basic provisions dealing with individual rights. In the 1954 constitution, the section on civil rights included 19 articles; now they were reduced to four. For example, the 1954 constitution protected the inviolability of private correspondence between citizens, the free choice of domicile, freedom to change residence (Art. 90); all these freedoms and guarantees disappeared in the constitution of 1975. The former Article 95 guaranteed "the freedom of the citizens to engage in scientific research, literary and artistic creation, and other cultural activities"; in the new constitution, this provision vanished without a trace. Former Article 88, protecting "freedom of religious beliefs," was amplified by "the freedom to hold no religious beliefs and to propagate atheism." Former Article 89, providing that no citizen may be arrested except by the decision of a People's Court or with the sanction of a People's Procuratorate," was changed to "no citizen shall be arrested except by the decision of a People's Court or with the sanction of a Public Security organ"—in effect, arbitrary police power was made constitutional. Former Article 97 provided that "people suffering loss by reason of infringement of their right as citizens by persons working in

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organs of the state have the right to compensation." This provision is suppressed in the new constitution, which thereby consecrates the irresponsibility of bureaucrats. (The new Article 27 does guarantee the altogether academic right of citizens "to lodge a complaint in writing or orally" against illegal actions performed by any employee of the state; citizens no longer have the right to claim reparations, but at least they are promised that the use of the complaint option will not entail "reprisals" on the part of the accused bureaucrat.)

H—tells me about one of his colleagues, an engineer in a Tsinan factory, who invented an improvement for a certain machine. His name was removed from his invention, which was credited to a group of workers in a shop in the same factory. A childish falsification? Not merely that. Little by little to foist on public acceptance the myth that illiterate workers are more capable than trained specialists of making technical improvements and scientific discoveries is fraught with danger for the future. It engenders a feeling that engineers, researchers, scholars are, after all, superfluous. The consequences will become obvious the day when the old specialists, the men who received a rigorous old-style training, will all have disappeared and there will no longer be anyone to produce the new inventions that can be credited to the "genius" of the uneducated masses. But then it will be too late.

Acts of lèse-majesté toward Mao, even when involuntary, are punished with particular severity. To tear or soil his portrait, for example, is a serious crime. Since his head appears in all newspapers and magazines, people must be careful when getting rid of old papers that no image of the Great Pilot ends up all tattered in the dustbin.

A British student of my acquaintance, who was visiting the People's Republic with a group of activist pilgrims, discovered to his cost how delicate Maoist sensibilities are in this respect. In the course of a meeting that was dragging on, he had mechanically used the pencil and pad set before him to doodle without rhyme or reason, the way one does when one is bored. The meeting over, he crumpled the page and, without a thought, tossed it in the wastebasket. That same evening, three official personages came to see the head of his delegation. Their expressions set and severe, they told him that a very grave incident had occurred that afternoon: an unspeakable anti-Chinese action, a counterrevolutionary provocation had been committed that required an immediate investigation . . . .

One of these dour-faced men then drew from his wallet the exhibit: it was the sheet of paper on which the student had scribbled during the meeting. The student had whiled away the time recreating from memory several characters from Charles Schulz's "Peanuts." Charlie Brown was there, and Linus and Lucy—and of course, the inevitable Snoopy. It was with Snoopy that things had gone awry. The amateur artist had drawn a balloon which has the canine hero say, "Long live Chairman Mao!" The head of the delegation, himself a dedicated Maoist, could not help smiling. Greatly relieved, he was sure now that he could instantly clear up an absurd misunderstanding. But he had soon to change his tune: try as he might, he could not introduce his lugubrious censors to the charms of "Peanuts." They persisted in thinking it impossible that this could be an innocent incident: just think of it—to put words praising the Great Leader in the mouth of a DOG! Did it not clearly evidence a hate-filled wish to insult the dignity of the Supreme Guide and, through him, to offend the entire Chinese nation? The culprit having been identified, he was subjected to a long interrogation. He was equally unable to persuade the authorities of his good faith; but luckily, because to that point he had demonstrated sincere Maoist fervor, attenuating circumstances were conceded and he was finally let off the hook by signing a confession in which he recognized the full horror of his crime, pledged his sincere support, and swore to sin no more.

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Along the same lines, Mme. L—, who had worked in a research institute in Peking, described to me the dismaying punishment she had one day felt obliged to visit on the younger of her two sons. The older boy, six, had been busy with his penmanship homework: it was a matter of copying out a hundred times *"Mao chu-hsi wan sui"*—"Long live Chairman Mao." The younger boy, four, asked him to come out and play. "I haven't finished writing my hundred 'Long live Chairman Mao's,'" his brother said. "Oh, may Chairman Mao drop dead!" the little fellow replied, with utter insouciance. Consternation and fear on all sides. His mother collared him then and there, and beat him in a way he would never forget. It was for the safety of the whole family—"Imagine if a neighbor had overheard the kid!"[7]

After waiting five years, C—— finally got his exit visa, probably because he came originally from Hong Kong. Initially, the management people in the industrial establishment where he worked had simply refused to forward his application, and he was forced to set about buying their complaisance by doing odd jobs for them in their homes (plumbing repairs and such) and giving them trifling gifts sent by his brother in Hong Kong for that express purpose. Just before leaving China, C—— was put through two days of indoctrination in Kwangchow in which he was taught the correct answers to various types of questions that might be put to him in the outside world: what the campaign of criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius signified; why recently Kwangchow had found itself without vegetables for some months, etc., etc. At the same time, he was put on his guard: "When you are outside of China, watch what you say. Be careful not to spread slander about the mother country, otherwise you risk arousing the anger of the revolutionary masses, and in that case you have only yourself to blame for all the serious consequences that would ensue."

This threat seems to have made a deep impression on C——. Had I not been a close friend of his family, I doubt that he would ever have agreed to meet me. He lived in fear, and insisted that each of our meetings be accompanied by extravagant precautions. They seemed superfluous to me, given the political atmosphere of that moment; in principle, however, I would be the last to make fun of them, for I know too well that in different circumstances such threats could perfectly well be put into effect.

In August 1967, in Hong Kong, Lin Pin and his cousin were assassinated before my eyes in the most atrocious and cowardly way.[8] It was the first real political lesson of my life, and I am not likely to forget it. As for C——, his experiences had been quite ordinary and he had no sensational revelations to make; what was unusual about him was his obsessive, devouring hatred for the regime, although he himself was a pure proletarian and his father the same.

People generally make their escape by swimming. The majority are young and athletic; otherwise, the chances of their surviving the attempt would be slight. Many are intercepted on the way; the sentence meted out varies in severity depending on the political situation of the moment. The majority of those arrested make a second try

[7]Actually, this continues a millenary Chinese tradition. The great sociologist and anthropologist Fei Hsiao-t'ung recalls in an essay how in his early childhood, even after the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty, his loving parents had punished him severely for offending, all unawares, an imperial taboo. There, too, it was a matter of the child's future and the clan's security.

[8]Lin Pin was a variety artist who produced a weekly satirical skit in Cantonese for Radio Hong Kong.

The show was immensely popular both in Hong Kong and on the other side of the frontier. When the Cultural Revolution began, Lin Pin aimed his witty barbs at the Maoist hysteria, which led the Communists to make an example of him. A fire bomb was thrown into his car and he burned alive together with a cousin. (The attack took place in front of my door, as I was leaving the house.) The next day, the Hong Kong Communist daily, *Takungpao*, published a victory bulletin about the killing by "the commando charged with punishing traitors."

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as soon as they have served their sentence. The record for attempted escapes is probably held by a man I was told about, who finally made it on his *eleventh* attempt. To really appreciate what such dogged perseverance means, one must realize the dangers and suffering the fugitives are exposed to. Many become exhausted and either drown or are swept away by the current in full view of their companions, who are too weakened to come to their aid. Others do not even reach the coast: they are shot down in the mountains by frontier guards or torn to pieces by police dogs. (In the main, refugees prefer to have to deal with conscripts in the People's Liberation Army, who are fairly decent, rather than with the militia, a paramilitary peasant force whose members are frighteningly brutal. Yet even here there can be exceptions to the rule: three youthful fugitives were crossing a wild valley and fell into the hands of a militia patrol that did not arrest them but instead pointed out the route they should follow to reach the coast.)

When fugitives have surmounted all such dangers and are about to set foot on the other shore, they must still elude the vigilance of the British police. Those who are picked up by the English authorities are given a dry pair of pants, a bowl of soup, and are conducted to the frontier. Here, according to the terms of a recent agreement between the governments of Her Gracious Majesty and the People's Republic of China, they are promptly delivered over to the Chinese police. Does routine make crime less shameful? One might well think so, for these incidents, which occur several times a month, have long since stopped arousing a ripple in public opinion.

In the Kwangchow region, clandestine emigration to Hong Kong is so widespread that it has given rise to a secret but lucrative business—for example, one People's commune specializes in the sale of boats to night travelers—and also to a sort of folklore complete with proverbs and songs. Several orthodox Maoist songs have been changed into "escape songs"; one of the most popular is called "Goodbye, Kwangchow"—a very sentimental song, in which a young man, poised for the great departure, enumerates in his heart one last time all the beloved aspects of his home town, which he has decided to leave forever. The numerous visitors coming from Hong Kong, especially students, are openly questioned by young people in Kwangchow who seek all sorts of information useful in their own escape plans; even before leaving China, many of them have developed a surprising familiarity with the topography of Hong Kong, and can name sections and streets of the city as readily as people who have lived there for years.

Few present-day experiences compete with the long-distance jet flight in forcing on the traveler both physical promiscuity and social isolation. By way of contrast, in second class on the small local train that connects Kowloon with the Chinese frontier (I used to take that train often when I was living in the New Territories), after five minutes total strangers are talking to one another.

Every day, hundreds of people from among the lower-class residents of Hong Kong return to China on a short visit to relatives in various villages in Kwangtung. These travelers are identified by the mountains of packages and bundles—food, clothing, utensils, and what not—they are carrying with them to relieve their relatives' poverty. There is something touching in the spectacle of these poor people en route to help out others more impoverished than they. Laden like beasts of burden, they are bent by the weight of heaps of shabby goods that, on the other side of the frontier, will suddenly endow them with an aura of "uncles from America."

Indeed, in this one area of activity, the People's Democracy is carrying out a useful economic operation. To a by no means negligible extent, it is placing on the shoulders of the laboring population of Hong Kong the task of provisioning and equipping several southern prefectures with consumer goods. What's more, these visitors are asked to buy their cargoes of gifts in the big Communist stores in Hong Kong which dispose of

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foodstuffs and other consumer goods that, within China, are beyond the means of the average buyer or are actually reserved for export and simply do not appear on the domestic market. Thus, products manufactured in China eventually come into the possession of the Chinese population *after* having made this lucrative detour via Hong Kong, thanks to which they have enabled the People's Republic to reap a harvest of foreign exchange.

The conversation of these humble people is strikingly apolitical. The joys and miseries they meet on both sides of the frontier are expressed in such personal and concrete terms that it is up to the listener to extract as best he can a more general significance. It is from people such as these that I have heard, for example, a whole series of anecdotes bearing on corruption—still tentative and small-scale—among public officials in the People's Republic. A woman tells the story of her father, who lives in China and to whom she had sent an expensive watch through the mails; her father had the following deal put to him by the custom officer on duty: "Either you agree to sell me the watch or I will have it returned to the sender."

Stories like this arouse curiosity and amusement in the listeners but no outrage. After all, don't they know from experience that the British custom men and police in Hong Kong are a hundred times more corrupt? As they see things, it is not really relevant that different behavior might be expected of an ignominious and completely decadent colonial government than from a young republic that wants to be socialist and revolutionary. They find nothing surprising or even shocking in officials' taking advantage of their position; all people ask is that they stay within bounds. The British police in Hong Kong, however, have lost all sense of proportion, which has rightly made them objects of scorn and hatred; on the other hand, the moderation of Communist officials in this regard is appreciated.

I'm sorry that I did not immediately jot down all those snatches of conversation. What I chiefly remember now is certain modulations of speech and voice. But I do clearly recall one vigorous, plump matron in wide black lustrine trousers, seated tailor-fashion on the wooden bench, one hand busy fanning herself with her straw hat, the other hand scratching her toes. In the notably juicy Cantonese dialect, she was roundly cursing the unhappy impulse that had led her to buy some lengths of expensive wool for cousins she had just visited in China. "Superb wools, you should have seen them! So beautiful that no one dares put them on his back in public. They're afraid of attracting their neighbors' attention and of being called in for questioning. So, do you know what they're using them for? Pajamas! Oh, if I'd only known I would have kept them for myself. All those beautiful woolens!"

One might think few people better placed to give us a nuanced evaluation of the Maoist regime than the numerous Chinese intellectuals who, after establishing themselves abroad on the heels of the Liberation, have recently returned to visit their native country. Unlike ordinary tourists, they can assess the changes that have taken place; above all, the relatives and friends they meet again invest objective information with that essential and irreplaceable human dimension that escapes other visitors. When, furthermore, these people are teachers, university professors, and researchers whose job is, precisely, to analyze and make known the whole of China—her history, her society, her culture—their witness should possess an even greater authority, and this places a special responsibility on them. How is it, then, that with far too few exceptions, they have as a group fallen short—sometimes keeping silent, sometimes mouthing what we could already read in *China Reconstructs* or any other propaganda sheet? It seems that their advantaged skills not only have not served to illuminate Chinese realities but sometimes actively helped to obscure or distort them. Rather than resenting and taking up arms against this "intellectuals' betrayal," it would surely be more useful

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to try to understand their problems and the complex reasons for their attitude.

First, one must take into account that many of these men have not seen their homeland for a quarter of a century, and their return is a stunning shock. The China they left in the aftermath of the war was a despairful chaos—rotten, ravaged, and bled white—and now they find it strong, clean, orderly, and verdant. This country, one periodically the victim of famine and natural disasters, is now very nearly able to feed its people, to cope with droughts, and to control its fearsome rivers. The vices, crimes and venalities of the former society, the corruption, social injustice, prostitution, banditry, drug addiction, and begging have if not entirely disappeared then at least been reduced to near invisibility for the transient visitor, and this represents such an incredible metamorphosis that it would seem to warrant many sacrifices. No less important, perhaps, than what they see in China today is the part played in more subtle fashion by their experiences over too many years in the West: the humiliating situation of the exile, the man without a country, who is the butt of thinly veiled scorn or insulting pity. "Opinion in the West has looked down on our country for too long," a Chinese colleague said to me, more or less in these words. "So, if now the idiots want to bow down before China, far be it from me to discourage them. Their admiration is based on a misconception? It's not up to me to open their eyes. Today's pro-Chinese illusions are not much more intelligent or informed than the anti-Chinese prejudices of yesterday, but at least they are not vicious. They manifest a sort of fundamental good will toward my country that flatters me and touches me, and I can only welcome it." How is one to blame him?

Under Mao, China has finally begun to enjoy a prestige throughout the world that she has not known since the reign of Ch'ien-lung. How could one expect men who have been humiliated for so long, and who have only now lifted up their heads, to denounce Maoism, which has given them a new status in Western eyes? To all this is added an old and constant pressure that I have discussed elsewhere—the aspiration of educated men to rally, from dynasty to dynasty, around the new reigning orthodoxy; this does not arise from simple opportunism but rather from a lack of historical alternatives. Today, there is also the fear that if their criticisms were to be expressed publicly, they might be diverted from their original purpose and exploited by China's enemies to batter down some of the regime's basic achievements that one must hope are permanent. Lastly, the chief cause of prudence and reticence on the part of these privileged witnesses is the subtle antennas they preserve in China—relatives and friends whose fate can be dramatically affected by all they will say or publish on their return. The Western public scarcely imagines to what point this kind of consideration has succeeded in gagging a large proportion of these travelers, and efficiently dammed a flood of revelations about human conditions in China today.

In just the modest framework of my personal relationships, I have had access to a rather impressive number of oral confidences or of travel notes privately circulated among a few people. Were they to be published, they would throw light on the way in which, in the People's Republic (to paraphrase Ionesco), it is out of the sorrow of men that the happiness of mankind is paid. Furthermore, honesty compels me to add immediately that if these Chinese emigré witnesses did feel free to speak out, atrocious as some of their depositions might be, they would not necessarily draw from them the same conclusions as we. For Westerners, pro- or anti-Mao as the case may be, it is relatively easy to reach firm opinions about Maoism. Apart from the fact of ignorance, which always makes it notably easier to reach hard and fast conclusions, for us the problem is intellectual—i.e., one-dimensional. All questions are theoretical, and we can argue about them and take positions. But for the Chinese—and this includes those who have established themselves abroad yet for whom Maoism is

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nonetheless an existential problem because of relatives back home—it assumes quasi-geological proportions. Our after-dinner debates, riddled as they are with irrelevance, bring to mind the question of the newsman who approaches the earthquake victim lying crushed under the debris of his ruined home, and inquires whether the man is for or against seisms.

Discretion, reticence, even silence have made the Overseas Chinese largely fail in their mission as observers, for which their incomparable knowledge of Chinese affairs equips them. Yet at least their failure is not attributable to base motives. The same could not be said of that small minority of itinerant polygraphs who have made a profession out of peddling the Maoist message to the four corners of the earth. It is not surprising that one finds in their ranks individuals who, in bygone days, distinguished themselves by the noisy zeal with which they served the Kuomintang, which then held the key to the cupboard. . . .

Slavish natures are always seeking a master; there is nothing astonishing in that, and nothing that need alarm us about such people. It is rather the Maoist camp that might better be worried by the sudden influx of such recruits, in case the prophecy of Lu Hsün should be borne out: "A revolution is dead when opportunists begin to join its ranks, for from that moment it is consumed from within."[9]

There is no more implacable policy than one that aspires to make mankind happy. (Who was the British author who spoke of "the hunted air of people for whom one has done some good"?) To paraphrase Zamyatin, the only way to deliver men from evil is to deliver them from freedom. The observation provides a clue to why certain clerics are fascinated with totalitarianism; one encounters this leitmotif, now in a major, now in a minor key, from Dostoievski's Grand Inquisitor to the Dominican reverend fathers who celebrate Maoism in *le Monde,* skirting en route prelates who were generous in their blessings of Mussolinian canons and the chaplains of Vichyite Boy Scouts.

In his admirable novel, *The Itinerary of the Rejected Old Man* (*Lao-ts'an yu-chi*), Liu E developed the paradox that claims principled leaders are more to be feared than corrupt leaders:

> Everyone knows that corrupt mandarins are evil, but few people know that irreproachable mandarins are worse; in fact, whereas the first, knowing their own vices, do not dare play the tyrant too blatantly, the second delude themselves that because they decline bribes they have the right to impose any decision they wish. Their clear conscience, combined with their prejudices, can lead them to massacre the innocent and even to place the destiny of the state in peril.

These reflections have never failed to impress readers. Lu Hsün, for example, quotes them in full in his "*Short History of the Chinese Novel.*"[10] But as pointed out above, the Maoist bureaucracy is becoming just a little more human: the mild corruption that is now evident at times helps to moderate some controls and could be the harbinger of a thaw, while the battalion of the incorruptible cadres, those lay saints given to total self-abnegation who constituted the special and fearsome strength of Maoism, has finally been decimated by age or by successive purges.

F——, 38 years old, is physically frail and sickly, but he gives one the impression of having moral strength, and he expresses himself with firmness and precision. He was born in Hong Kong, and when he was 17 he defied his parents and went to China, moved by patriotic feelings and a hatred for the colonial government. He pursued literary studies at a university in Central China, then worked in a film studio in Manchuria. During the Great Leap Forward, he was sent with his fellow-workers to build a railway line. He was assigned to work beyond his strength (moving steel track) but was nonetheless required to

[9]"San hsien chi," in *Lu Hsün ch'uan-chi, vol. 4, p. 85; Peking, 1963.*

[10]Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih lueh," in Lu Hsün ch-üan-chi, vol. 8 pp. 246-47; Peking, 1963.

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meet the insane norms then enforced, and as a result he ruined his health permanently. Periodically laid low by illness and coughing blood, he returned to Kwangchow, where he vegetated for ten years during which time it was impossible for him to find regular work because he was not "of good family." (The unemployment problem in Chinese cities is never mentioned in the West, yet it has grown to considerable proportions.) At last, the secretary of a local committee of the Party became friendly and wanted to secure for F—— a decent, stable job in a factory. This was very generous of him, for come the next "mass movement," there would always be the risk of some activist's exhuming F——'s undesirable social origins; in that event, it would be the Party secretary who would be arraigned and held responsible for having helped a bourgeois infiltrate the proletariat.

But by that time F—— had already begun to prepare his escape; to leave Kwangchow would have compromised everything, so he declined his friend's offer. The man could not understand how he could refuse such an opportunity, and urged him so insistently to accept it that at last F—— took the enormous risk of confiding his plan. The other, Party member though he was, showed that he was a true friend and simply responded, "Given my position, I can't help you in such an undertaking, but *I understand you.*" F—— spent three years preparing for his escape. With four companions, two intellectuals and two fishermen, he bought a boat. Before the big departure, the crew practiced rowing every evening for months. The training bore fruit: when they finally set out, they were pursued by a boatful of militiamen for a whole hour, after which the exhausted pursuers gave up the chase.

In Hong Kong, this university graduate is now employed as a clerk in a shabby little electrical-supply shop, a position he owes to the kindness of a friend. The material conditions of his life leave him indifferent, here as in China. For him, the decision to leave China seems to have been a response to an imperious moral exigency. The recurrent theme of all his stories is the violence official logic wreaks on people's innate humane and decent impulses. As a policy, this reached a paroxysmic pitch during the Cultural Revolution, which for the young generation was a methodical, large-scale initiation into brutality. F—— recalls how old men were forced by schoolboys to kneel on shards; or, another time, how boys with bayonets stabbed the corpses of rebels strung up on lampposts along a street in Kwangchow, and then, as a diversion, slit their bellies, spilling out the guts. No one, he adds, dared say anything, do anything—intervene in any way—for fear of being accused on the spot of "bourgeois humanism" or of culpable compassion for class enemies. But when the Pearl River began to float down so many cadavers that some were washed up on Hong Kong beaches (I remember this period), the authorities, concerned for their good reputation abroad, took energetic measures to intercept bodies as they drifted with the current. The bounty paid for each corpse fished from the river was a munificent eight yuan.

> "It's a Cock-eyed world, John. The pessimists look ahead and the optimists look back."
>
> —*Prisoner of Mao*, p. 212

Pasqualini's first-hand reportage should be read not only out of elementary solidarity with one quarter of the human race and concern for their political destiny but also because the experiment being attempted in the People's Republic and so well described in this book might well prove to be a sort of prophecy on a planetary scale. The responses of readers and influential critics have varied but indicate that, in a way, public opinion is already quite well prepared for eventual domestic variations of this Maoist recipe.

Contrary to what the hirelings of the Department of Propaganda have been quick to claim, Pasqualini's book is not anti-Chinese. Quite the reverse. I defy anyone to finish it without feeling increased respect for the Chinese people, people so irreducibly

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human that they are able to preserve a sort of basic decency (the "common decency" that was the leitmotif of Orwell's political thought) even in conditions that could not be more precisely calculated to shred the intimate texture of their humanity.

Like all profound works, Pasqualini's book presents a measure of ambiguity that could lead to its being misconstrued several ways. One way I will call "the Kuomintang reading." A number of atrocity stories are reported, and for the propaganda arm of the Kuomintang the temptation to take them out of context and stitch them together has been irresistible.[11] Once again they try to reduce the Maoist regime to the petty dimensions of macabre buffonery in the style of General Pinochet or Colonel Amin. Now, the Kuomintang's capacity for understanding Maoism is roughly that of a small bankrupt trader's ability to grasp the workings of the Rockefellers' fortune. Maoism—and for some people one must keep repeating this—is not simply a Kuomintang that has succeeded, a red terror, pure and lasting, that has replaced a corrupt and inept white terror. No. In order to perceive the specific nature of Maoism, these episodes of violence and sadism must be put back into context, and then they appear as what they really are: false notes, misfirings of the engine; when the machine has been put into perfect running condition, you can be sure that these deplorable accidents will not be repeated.

This leads us to a second kind of misreading, the reverse of the first, and one that, for the sake of convenience, I will call "the Fairbank reading." The illustrious American scholar has remarked, a propos of the Pasqualini book, that if one compares the Maoist and the Soviet camps, "the comparison is entirely in China's favor." In point of fact, if the Soviet system is compared with the Chinese as described by Pasqualini, it is obvious that the Gulag Archipelago is still at an unbelievably backward stage: it is only a monstrous chaos, a mess, a pottering about of primitives. In every area, insofar as efficiency, productivity, discipline, and especially ideological control are concerned, the Maoist camps represent the most gigantic "leap forward" ever achieved in the world history of the concentration-camp universe, which with them is finally entering upon its golden age. But if one has, therefore, the right to speak of "progress," it must be made clear that this progress is apparent above all to those who adopt Big Brother's point of view.

Thirty years ago, when the mandarins of the left were confronted with proofs of the existence of the Stalinist camps, they were plunged into a great dilemma: by revealing the truth, did one not risk driving the working class to despair? Then the Soviet experiment went bankrupt, and the flock of ideologists turned Eastward, ever Eastward! It is only logical that when their capital of enthusiasm was temporarily made idle by the Soviet failure they should end up investing it in Peking. (Albania, given its modest dimensions, could not have supplied stages sturdy enough to support their not inconsiderable egos.) And who, if not Mao, had laid explicit claim to the heritage of Stalin? . . .

So I suppose that again there will be tender consciences to protest in the name of the working class against the frivolity with which Pasqualini's revelations threaten reborn proletarian hopes. On the other hand, since the proletariat seems to have acquired the insolent habit of thinking for itself, without consulting its benevolent father confessors, the latters' objections have lost much of their pertinence. And if this brave phalanx is ever parted from its Mao, it will still have in reserve—Eastward, ever Eastward!—its Kim Il Sung. . . .

The concentration camp occupies a central place in the Maoist world and provides a key to all its mechanisms. In China, the difference between the camp inmate is less a difference of status than a difference of degree. In a way, the camp represents a model, a projection of the future, an ideal society. It is what society

[11] *Mao Tse-tung ti ch'iu-t'u*: extracts translated as an appendix to a digest of *The Gulag Archipelago (Ku-la-ke ch'ün tao)*. Taipei, 1974.

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would be were its managers able to overcome the thousand and one forces of resistance and inertia that everywhere conspire to block the immediate nationwide realization of a certain conceptual model, a vision, that so far exists without hindrance only in the mind. China is one great school of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung in which the ordinary citizen appears as the truant dunce while the camp inmate seems the model student. The former still lives in today's world, he is bombarded by manifold temptations, wooed by manifold "diversions" (in the Pascalian sense of the word)—the Sunday football game, his girlfriend's smile, a novel, his baby's whooping cough. Everything combines unremittingly to weaken and conflict with what should be the one object of his attention, the exclusive motivation of his actions, the pole of all his desires, the spring of all his feelings; that is, the reform of himself, the building of "Socialism," the study and application of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung. The camp inmate, on the other hand, is delivered of this lamentable freedom that dooms the ordinary mortal to grope his way through the shadows; in an intense, total, and permanent way, the inmate is exposed, entirely naked, to the devouring sun of orthodoxy; his feet are placed on the straight and narrow path that infallibly leads to salvation. (Taking off from Pasqualini's evidence, one could readily conceive of an Orwellian projection of the future in which all of society would have become one immense camp; the rare dissident or incorrigible who might still exist would be subjected to the worst conceivable punishment: he would be expelled from the camp and condemned to freedom.)

Within the camp, redemption is inescapable; no loophole, no change of course, is available. The final success of the operation does not even require the patient to be sincere; the external exigency that requires him to adjust to the milieu replaces any subjective notion of sincerity, which becomes clouded, gradually loses all relevance, and finally disappears. Pasqualini's account is irreplaceable if one is to understand this process. As Ssu-ma Ch'ien pointed out more than 2,000 years ago in his famous "Reply to Jen An," the man who is caught up in the punitive wheels of a totalitarian system has only two alternatives between which he must choose instantly and irrevocably: immediate suicide or survival. The second option is no less committing than the first, for in this system to agree to survive means to renounce being oneself. Survival implies adjustment to the milieu; adjustment to the milieu requires the adoption of a certain way of acting and thinking; in an initial phase, the prisoner adopts this mode of acting and thinking the way an actor assumes a role; in a second phase, however, it is the character who, little by little, is substituted for the person, the mask for the face, and the untruth of the jailers for the truth of the prisoner. In other words, to survive you must play the game; by playing the game you are changed by the game. In the final stages of this evolution—which for Pasqualini stopped at midpoint because he was prematurely set free—adaptation to the upside-down world can become so complete that if the individual is abruptly reintroduced into an upright world he is assailed by unbearable vertigo, which sometimes defeats his every effort to fit once more into a normal environment.

In the last weeks of my stay in Hong Kong, I witnessed a bizarre family drama that might suitably be reported here in brief. (However, I have no doubt that good Maoists will be able to salvage the story for their own purposes and find that it movingly confirms the soundness of their religion.)

M—— is 42 years old, comes from North China, and is one of my very good friends. He had quite a hard childhood and youth: his father was killed in action during the war; his mother, a courageous and energetic woman, strove mightily to hold her numerous family together, but M—— remembers often going hungry during that period. On the eve of the Communists' seizing power, his mother contrived to get him out of the country and, at the age of 15, M——found himself facing the

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big world alone. After countless vicissitudes, and armed only with courage and his own talents, he was able to establish himself extremely well. He is now married to a charming woman, who comes from the same province as he, and he is the father of two fine children.

Some 20 years ago, M—— had managed to trace his mother, who had remained in China, and he corresponded with her quite regularly. Choosing her words carefully, his mother let him understand that she had passed through some harsh experiences and that she wanted to leave China.

After several years of applying and reapplying, an exit visa was finally issued, and mother and son were reunited in Hong Kong; they had not seen each other for almost 30 years. She related in detail what had happened to her. Accused of complicity with the Kuomintang (her husband had served in the Nationalist Army) and of collusion with American imperialists (her son has made his fortune in the United States), she had been subjected to censure, harassment of various kinds, and once to such brutal maltreatment that she was half-paralyzed for almost a year. But her psychological state spoke more eloquently than her words of the sufferings she had gone through. She had a persecution mania, which manifested itself in ways all the more painful for her being otherwise remarkably alert, given her age. For example, she got it into her head that some 60 people (among them the torturers who had beat her so cruelly 20 years before) had followed her all the way from the north down to Hong Kong. Every morning she would study the "Apartments for Rent" ads in the newspaper, for she believed that "they" were trying to find lodgings all around her son's residence (she was then living with him) in order to enclose her within range of their surveillance. She believed that the television screen was a sort of window through which "they" were observing her without her being able to see "them." However, since for her TV was a pleasant distraction, the solution she found to reconcile her pleasure with her safety was to watch it from the secure vantage of a corner or while half hiding her face behind an opened newspaper.

The cruellest of all was that the mania of the lonely old woman was visited first and foremost on the person most devoted to her—her son. M—— did everything in his power to make life pleasant for her, but everything he did only aroused fresh suspicions. When he realized that she was wearing shapeless rags as underclothes, he bought her the softest and most comfortable undergarments he could find to replace them, but his mother was frightened by such luxury and instead of wearing them hid them. In order to induce her to use her new clothes, he had her old rags thrown out, but she took this to mean that her own son was trying to rob her. At table, she was careful not to eat her fill; instead, surreptitiously she would make off with bread or dry biscuits, which she would nibble on in bed, under her quilt, with all lights out. She had become rather attached to her daughter-in-law, and occasionally was quite relaxed with her, even to the point of making small confidences; once she explained that today in China family quarrels arise always at table, when the food is being divided—hence her policy of serving herself as parsimoniously as possible in order not to invite criticism. However, the more her son and daughter-in-law tried to surround her with attentions, the more she withdrew in agonized distrust.

The aggravation of her neurosis was accompanied by short periods of lucidity, during which she was able to measure the extent of her breakdown. She realized that if she were to continue like that she would go under entirely. She now longed to return to the familiar landmarks of her daily existence, to her little hovel, her neighbors in poverty—all implacable and sordid parapets of her tottering sanity. She spoke of returning to China. The mere mention of such a thing made M—— burst into tears: no, it was impossible, monstrous, it was an aberration after waiting all these years for the one chance of getting an exit visa, after achieving the scarcely to be hoped for miracle that had

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reunited them, how could one destroy such happiness forever?

"What happiness?" the old woman retorted. "I am not happy here. I want to go back." Day after day, she returned to the attack, and obstinately ignored her son's distress: she had made her decision, no one could sway her. Finally, there was nothing to do but give in. The Chinese authorities were caught off guard by the request for a return visa; they spent some time conjecturing what plot could be concealed behind such a paradoxical move; in the end, having assured themselves that the unfortunate woman was utterly inoffensive, they granted her her visa. M——, his wife, and the two boys, all in tears, took the old woman as far as the frontier; she was dry-eyed, and she walked across the Lowu Bridge with what for her age was a quick step.

A month after, M—— told me that she had finally sent him a postcard with a brief message saying that she had arrived safely. Never having benefited from first-hand experience with the Maoist regime, he has never understood what happened. □

— *Translated by* ADRIENNE FOULKE

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Irving Howe

Lillian Hellman and the McCarthy Years

There are writers with so enticing a style that, in their own behalf, they must stop themselves and ask: "Is what I am saying true? Charming yes, persuasive also; but *true*?" This has, or should, become a problem for Lillian Hellman. Her three recent memoirs recalling her life with Dashiell Hammett and, in *Scoundrel Time*,* her 1952 clash with the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), all make attractive reading. By the same token, however, Miss Hellman has reached a point where she risks mythologizing her own life, transfiguring the story of the taciturn Dash and the peppery Lillian into a popular literary romance.

But let that pass, and let us turn to the claim of Miss Hellman and her admirers that in her latest book she provides an accurate and balanced record of the McCarthy years. My contention is that she does not. What she provides is half the story, a vivid and useful half, but no more.

Nothing, to be sure, in her book is as false and certainly nothing as vulgar as the Introduction Garry Wills has written for it. Yet, nuance and sensibility apart, Miss Hellman and Wills hold pretty much the same view of the early 1950s. Quickly summarized, it is this: The U.S. was seized in those years by an ideological fever, whipped up by Cold War reactionaries. America, says Wills, had fallen "in love with total war"; American intellectuals, says Miss Hellman, grew fearful that the spread of Communism might bring to an end "their pleasant way of life." Now that the Nazis were smashed, a new scapegoat was needed and for this the Communists were ready at hand. The dirty work was done by congressional inquisitors, the intellectual support given by anti-Communist liberals and radicals. The ADA, sneers Wills, did "the Committee's [HUAC's] kind of work in a more sophisticated way."

This view of the McCarthy years is simple, self-serving, and untrue. It starts from a premise always dear to those who would deny the reality of Communism as problem or threat: the premise that there is a single, undifferentiated, and necessarily reactionary "anti-Communism." Thus, writes Miss Hellman, the anti-Stalinist intellectuals have not yet found it "a part of conscience to admit that their Cold War anti-Communism was perverted, possibly against their wishes, into the Vietnam War and then into the reign of Nixon, their unwanted but inevitable leader." It is an astonishing sentence, with gaps in the argument through which battalions of historical complications could march.

• It assumes the existence of a unified body of intellectuals, all holding the same views about Communism, McCarthyism, etc. But even within the ranks of "the New York intellec-

* *Scoundrel Time*, by Lillian Hellman. Introduction by Garry Wills. Boston: Little, Brown.

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tuals," whom Miss Hellman seems mostly to have in mind, this was untrue.

• It is preposterous as history. Complicated chains of events, as well as unforeseeable accidents, intervened between the McCarthy years and the Vietnam War; events and accidents that could more plausibly be assigned as causes of that war than could the McCarthyite inquisition. Equally preposterous is the claim that Nixon as leader was "inevitable." What about the many intellectuals who did *not* follow Nixon, either evitably or inevitably? What about the possibility that the events of the late 1960s created a backlash from which Nixon profited? Suppose that in a few crucial states, like California, voters inclined toward the New Left had voted for Humphrey—might not Nixon have been defeated and not become our "inevitable" leader? Miss Hellman has wandered into the swamp of determinism/freedom that more experienced historians know it is wise to avoid.

• The shoddiness, in any case, of Miss Hellman's argument can be revealed by proposing an equivalent: "The uncritical support given Stalinist Russia by people like Dashiell Hammett and other literary people led, possibly against their wishes, to a whitewash of Gulag Archipelago and the murder of millions, and for this the fellow-traveling intellectuals must inevitably be held responsible." I imagine Miss Hellman would be outraged by such an argument, insisting we must make discriminations as to kinds of support, degrees of involvement, and the nature of motives. Well, let her try to imagine as much for others.

Except as a rhetorical device for dull-witted reactionaries, on the one hand, and bashful fellow-travelers on the other, there was no such thing as a monolithic "anti-Communism." Opposition to Communism by demagogues like McCarthy rested on reactionary opinions and a fear privileges might be lost; opposition to Communism by liberals and radicals rested on libertarian opinions and a fear freedoms might be lost. In political methods and outlook, Joe McCarthy was a lot closer to the Communist Khrushchev than to the anti-Communist Norman Thomas.

That "anti-Communism" was exploited by the McCarthy hooligans does not mean there was no reason for serious people to worry about Communism as a threat to freedom. The Soviet Union had just gobbled up Eastern Europe—but Garry Wills sees only the "aggressive" foreign policy of Harry Truman. If Miss Hellman and Wills want to provide a balanced picture of this historical period, they must point not only to the failures of American policy, real and grave as these were, but also to the reasons that led many of us to fear that the Communist movement in Europe had gathered a dynamic of expansion threatening political freedom.

At the least, a few simple facts! Though Wills carries on at length about foolishness spewed by Ayn Rand before HUAC in order to ridicule the very idea that there was any ground for concern about Communism, he says nothing, nor does Miss Hellman, about the discussions then being carried on throughout the world on this matter by such people as Ignazio Silone, George Orwell, Nicola Chiaromonte, Willy Brandt, Norman Thomas, and many others. Really, to think you can dispose of any point of view by invoking Ayn Rand!

Still more—and here we come to a *feat*—both Wills and Miss Hellman talk about the early '50s without so much as mentioning the event that sent shivers through the hearts of intellectuals, and not theirs alone. Imagine writing about this period, imagine discussing the response of intellectuals to Communism, McCarthyism, and all the rest, without even mentioning the 1948 Communist coup in Czechoslovakia. It would be like writing a study of the upheavals in the late 1960s without mentioning the Vietnam War! For it was the coup in Czechoslovakia that, rightly or wrongly, persuaded many people that there could be no lasting truce with the Communist world. I don't know whether Garry Wills is old enough to remember that event, or has troubled to read anything about it, but Lillian Hellman must remember it.

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There were, to be sure, intellectuals who buckled under the McCarthyite assault (it was not, by the way, a "terror": people could speak, write, agitate against it without fearing a knock on their doors at 4:00 in the morning). Other intellectuals allowed their hatred of Communism to deflect them from an adequate resistance to McCarthy. As instances of the latter, Miss Hellman cites *Partisan Review* and *Commentary*. She is largely unfair about the first, largely right about the second. *Partisan Review*, as she notes, printed in 1954 a violently anti-McCarthy and free-swinging attack by myself on conformist intellectuals; the piece was written at the suggestion of Philip Rahv, then its leading editor; and it could hardly have gotten into the pages of *PR* behind the backs of the editors. What seems to me true is that the magazine didn't take a sufficiently bold lead in rallying intellectuals against McCarthyism; but that is something very different from what Miss Hellman says. As for *Commentary*, it was then controlled by intellectuals hurrying rightward (a fate that seems to befall that journal periodically) and its record on McCarthyism was, let us say, shabby. Two of its leading editors, Elliot Cohen and Irving Kristol, while not giving their approval to McCarthy, went to some lengths to dismiss the idea that the Wisconsin demagogue constituted a serious threat to American liberties. Kristol wrote: "there is one thing the American people know about Senator McCarthy; he, like them, is unequivocally anti-Communist. About the spokesmen for American liberalism, they feel they know no such thing. And with some justice." Miss Hellman is right to attack this wretched stuff, but by no stretch of polemic could it be called typical of what intellectuals in America at large or in New York in particular were then saying.*

* It was not even typical of all the editors of *Commentary*, since as Nathan Glazer recently wrote in that magazine, he did attack McCarthyism in its pages during the early 1950s when he was one of its editors. But his attempt retrospectively to exonerate the magazine from Miss Hellman's charges seems to me, on this point, very feeble.

Surely she must remember, as Wills might have troubled to find out, that there were old-fashioned liberals like Henry Steele Commager and Roger Baldwin and old-fashioned Socialists like Norman Thomas who combined a principled opposition to Communism with an utter rejection of McCarthyism. Thomas fought for the liberties of the very Stalinists who had supported the prosecution of Trotskyists in Minneapolis under the notorious Smith Act. Pick up the first issue of *Dissent* in 1954 and you'll find an opening piece—either by Lew Coser or myself, I forget which—attacking McCarthy as a bum and criticizing some of the *Commentary* people for their waffling.

The same holds for ADA. Perhaps some people in that group had bad records in the early 1950s. There were cowards everywhere in scoundrel time. But as it happens, a hero of Miss Hellman's book is Joe Rauh, the lawyer who represented her before HUAC. Everyone who knows ADA also knows that Rauh has been one of its two or three central figures from the moment of its birth. If Garry Wills is so intent upon pillorying ADA, shouldn't he at least ask how he can reconcile the charge that ADA did "the work" of HUAC with the fact that this leading ADA figure emerges in the Hellman book as a staunch defender of liberties? Didn't Wills read Hellman or Hellman Wills?

Wills is equally feckless in writing about the once-famous Waldorf Conference in 1949, of which Miss Hellman was a prominent sponsor. In the name of peace, this gathering was organized by "the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace," a group Wills neglects, somehow, to characterize politically. In fact, it was dominated by Communists and their friends, and represented the last hurrah of the fellow-traveling intellectuals in the U.S. Its overwhelming stress was to blame the developing Cold War on the U.S.

Wills tells us that U.S. footpads and intellectual auxiliaries joined at this conference to harass lovers of peace. "Guardians of liberalism" like Mary McCarthy and Dwight Macdonald went to the sessions "in

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order to disrupt them." The composer Shostakovich, who was one of the Russian delegates, "was, in the name of freedom, publicly insulted for not being free."

False, every word. In 1949 Mary McCarthy and Dwight Macdonald were anti-Stalinist, independent radicals—to speak of them as "guardians of liberalism" is gratuitously patronizing. Nor did they disrupt the conference. McCarthy, Macdonald, and Robert Lowell asked questions of Shostakovich (who looked as if he wanted to be anywhere but where he was) and of the Russian culture commissar Alexander Fedayev (who looked as if he'd like to get these American wiseguys back home, he'd teach them to ask questions!). The questions concerned the fate of Russian writers persecuted by the regime and, in the case of Lowell, the sufferings of conscientious objectors in the Soviet Union.

Now, to someone trained in a GPU school all this might have seemed "disruptive." But to Garry Wills, so severe in his judgments about standing up for freedom?

In her own essay Miss Hellman is more charming and certainly writes better than Wills. She has earned the right to be proud of her record in defying the HUAC bums, though her explanation of why some of her friends, like Clifford Odets, lost their nerve and gave names to the Committee is very disturbing. "The children of timid immigrants [Jewish immigrants?—I.H.] are often remarkable people: energetic, intelligent, hardworking; and often they make it so good that they are determined to keep it at any cost." Are we to infer that the children of bourgeois German Jews or starchy Protestant Americans have proven themselves to be rocks of fortitude in resisting tyrannical authority? And as for that remark about "timid immigrants," Miss Hellman ought to look at a recent book called *World of Our Fathers*, where she can learn just how "timid" many of those immigrants were.

Miss Hellman's main target is finally the intellectuals, those—mostly unnamed—who failed to stand up or stand up strongly enough to McCarthy. "Up to the late 1940s," she had believed that "the educated, the intellectual lived by what they claimed to believe: freedom of thought and speech, the right of each man to his own convictions." Well, as I've indicated, a number of American intellectuals did just that. Yet before Miss Hellman grows so furious with the others, those who caved in and those who wobbled, oughtn't she to be asking the same *kind* of questions about the people with whom she collaborated politically over the years, signing statements, organizing the Waldorf Conference, sponsoring the Progressive party? How can it be that someone who believed in such splendid things didn't trouble to ask friends and collaborators whether *they* lived by "freedom of thought and speech, the right of each man to his own convictions"?

Miss Hellman doesn't ask such questions, she isn't inclined to make things hard for herself. She is riding high these days—and no one, really, should begrudge Lillian Hellman her success, for she is a gifted writer. Still, I find myself disturbed by the way she clings to fragments of old dogmas that, at other and more lucid moments, she knows she should have given up long ago. "Most of the Communists I had met," she writes, "seemed to me people who wanted to make a better world; many of them were silly people and a few of them were genuine nuts, but that doesn't make for denunciations. . . ."

No individual should be harassed or persecuted, or denounced to the cops, for holding even the most obnoxious opinions. But what about judgments of the opinions themselves and of the public consequences of holding them?

Most of the Communists Miss Hellman met may have wanted a better world, but the better world they wanted came down to a soul-destroying and body-tormenting prison: the Moscow trials, the Stalin dictatorship, the destruction of millions during the forced collectivization, and a systematic denial of the slave camps in Siberia. (Do you really think we didn't know about Gulag Archipelago until Solzhenitsyn published his remarkable book? He offered new material, but the

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essential facts were known as far back as the late 1930s—and were violently denied by many of the people with whom Miss Hellman worked at the Waldorf Conference and the Progressive party.)

A final point and we are done. On her next-to-last page Miss Hellman writes that the intellectuals whom she has attacked have a right to criticize her for "taking too long to see what was going on in the Soviet Union. But whatever our mistakes, I do not believe we did our country any harm."

Dear Lillian Hellman, you could not be more mistaken! Those who supported Stalinism and its political enterprises, either here or abroad, helped befoul the cultural atmosphere, helped bring totalitarian methods into trade unions, helped perpetuate one of the great lies of our century, helped destroy whatever possibilities there might have been for a resurgence of serious radicalism in America. Isn't that harm enough?

Scoundrels there were in the 1950s, as in all other times, and Lillian Hellman has pointed to some of them accurately. But she would have done both her readers and herself a greater service if she had been more precise—and more comprehensive—in her pointing. □

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Marvin Caplan

Truth — and Shame — about Busing

Four years ago, when he wrote on busing for *Dissent*,[1] William Taylor cited as evidence for blacks still wanting integration the loud cheers with which an audience of black educators and leaders greeted a statement by Derrick Bell, a black professor of law at Harvard. "The right of black children to attend integrated public schools. . . .," Bell said, "is a right that is crucial not only to black success but to black survival in this country."

So much for ringing declarations! Whatever his audience may think these days, Derrick Bell has changed his views. This change should dismay anyone who shared the liberal jubilation back in 1954 when the Supreme Court, in the *Brown* decision, seemed at last to have overturned the pernicious *Plessy* v. *Ferguson* doctrine of 1896: that racially "separate but equal" facilities could still be constitutional. "We conclude that in the field of public education," a unanimous Court declared, "the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

It is symptomatic of today's shifting views on school desegregation that Bell now looks back on *Plessy* with something close to favor. Deploring the "rigidity" of such civil rights forces as the NAACP, Bell sees in *Plessy* a possible alternative to integration. "Separate but equal," he says, "may have been re-oriented rather than overruled by *Brown*."[2]

[1]"Busing: Realities and Evasions," *Dissent*, Fall 1972.

[2]"Waiting on the Promise of *Brown*," *Duke University Law Review*, Spring 1975.

Derrick Bell is not the first waverer in the ranks of those who once were committed without compromise to integrated education. Best known and most quoted of the waverers is Dr. James Coleman, sociologist at the University of Chicago and author of the 1966 study often cited in support of integration, who has now become a spokesman for those who fear that the desegregation of urban public schools is hastening a white flight from our cities. He and Bell and others now profess to have second thoughts about how far they are ready to go to achieve desegregation.

One need not look to polls to become aware of changing attitudes. One need only move among liberal friends at a suburban party. There is, at such times, a pervasive sense of people in retreat. In the absence of conclusive evidence that school desegregation has improved the academic performance of black children or race relations among the children who now are mixed—hardly surprising if one considers how brief our experience with desegregation has been, the waverers often suggest that integrated education may not be worth the effort. This notion invokes for some of us a recollection of how often black Americans have been denied constitutional rights because change was said to be too difficult or unsettling. Every now and then in such encounters with the new uncertainty—a very old one, actually—the darker side of doubt peeps out. When white middle-class parents, for instance, express their fear of the beatings and ripoffs their children may run into if they are sent to previously all-black city

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schools—or when a liberal like Governor Philip Noel of Rhode Island injudiciously suggests that there can be little benefit in desegregation for the ghetto youngster who spends four hours in a suburban class room and 18 "in that sweathole with the drunken father and the mother who's out peddling her. . . ."

The issue is full of contradiction and confusion. The polls that tell us more than 70 percent of the public is against busing also tell us that a like percentage is still in favor of integration. The occasional violence that a busing order may evoke—Boston for instance—commands so much national attention, it obscures such facts as the recent CBS sampling of public opinion in which people listed busing 29th among the problems they worry about. It wasn't much of an issue in the presidential primaries until Gerald Ford began stirring it up in what seemed a desperate attempt to win delegates in Kentucky and Tennessee; and now he's stuck with the strategy.

What has meanwhile been obscured are the successes—in the communities where after some initial anguish people have come to terms with what the law requires of them. Often forgotten, too, is that of the 18,000 school districts in this country, only a small fraction is involved in busing plans for desegregation.

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the busing controversy has put prointegration forces on the defensive. Wherever busing is an issue, there is evidence of eroding support among those who ought to be working for desegregation. Perhaps it is most striking and disheartening in those bastions of power where law is made and administered—in federal agencies, Congress, and the courts. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) has virtually stopped enforcing school desegregation laws, unless it is forced to do so by the courts.

Apprehension in the civil rights movement, as the Burger Court took shape, that *Brown* might be undermined, was allayed somewhat by that Court's first school decisions—most notably, perhaps, in the *Swann* case in 1971. There, in the course of ruling on a desegregation plan for Charlotte, North Carolina, the Court upheld busing as "a normal and accepted tool of educational policy" and underscored this by saying a "desegregation plan cannot be limited to the walk-in school." But old apprehensions have been stirred again by the Burger Court's handling of cases that sought to establish metropolitan plans for desegregation. In the case affecting Richmond, Virginia, in 1972, the Court, by a 4-to-4 decision, let stand an appellate ruling that rejected a merger of city and county schools. In 1974, in *Milliken* v. *Bradley*, it gave metropolitan desegregation plans their biggest setback yet by refusing, 5-to-4, to hold the state of Michigan accountable for its segregated schools and rejecting the plan that would have required interdistrict busing between Detroit and 53 nearly all-white suburbs.

In spite of such embattled figures as Boston's District Court Judge W. Arthur Garrity, Jr., and Richmond's Judge Robert R. Merhige, Jr., and the late Judge Stephen J. Roth of Detroit—men whose commitment to their constitutional obligations never wavered—it may be that the federal courts, or at least five members of the Supreme Court, have reached the limit of what they are willing to do to accomplish desegregation.

The Senate, which for more than a decade has turned back irresponsible onslaughts on school desegregation, did a turnabout last year. A small number of waverers among its liberal members helped adopt an "antibusing" amendment of doubtful constitutionality. Now, in an election year, with many congressional candidates ready to exploit the "busing" issue and President Ford certain to exploit it, there may be further turmoil before this session of Congress ends.

Faced with such defections, with rising doubts and reappraisals among expected allies, it is hard for anyone committed to an integrated society and to the schools as a principal instrument for integration to be sanguine. So we must ask: Is the goal still

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viable? And how did we reach this crisis in little more than 20 years?

II

School desegregation did not begin in earnest with the *Brown* decision, though it would be impossible without it. Real progress toward dismantling our dual school system began 10 years later, under Lyndon Johnson, with the enactment, at his prodding, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the federal education acts of 1965, particularly the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The heart of the 1964 law is Title VI, which empowers the federal government to cut off funds from any federally financed program administered in a discriminatory manner. ESEA, for the first time, made federal funds available to public schools, a prospect so tempting that even southern school districts were ready to try complying with the law in order to get the money. Staffed in the '60s with people committed to integration, HEW was able to achieve notable gains in school desegregation, mostly in the South. Even then, segregation in the North proved more stubbornly resistant. HEW's attempt to get Chicago to break up the most rigidly segregated school system in the country ended in ignominious failure. Despite the President's convictions on the issue, the Johnson administration was not ready to do battle with the Daley machine.

But even with the trimming dictated by politics, a system for desegregating schools evolved that worked pretty well. By 1968, it had become practically automatic: school districts that did not comply with HEW's directives or court desegregation orders knew that, under Title VI, the flow of federal money would simply stop. Then Nixon came to power, and in 1969 things began to fall apart. It is simplistic and tempting to blame everything on Nixon. No doubt, public sentiment in support of desegregation had begun to wane by the time he took office; the shift in sentiment may even have helped him win. But it is also true that much of what his Administration did tended to weaken the drive for desegregation. Robert Finch, his first HEW secretary, whose liberal credentials were always overestimated, wasted little time in tampering with the compliance apparatus HEW had established. He eased restrictions on school districts that would not comply with Title VI and turned from administrative enforcement to "persuasion." Finch and Attorney General Mitchell teamed up to move enforcement away from routine administrative action to the longer process of litigation. And in the courts, civil rights forces were startled to find that the Justice Department no longer fought on their side but was just as likely to turn up aligned against them with segregationist governors and school boards. Nixon's public statements on busing were all against desegregation.

Things have not changed under Gerald Ford; they may have worsened. It took a court suit, *Adams* v. *Richardson*, to find HEW derelict in its responsibilities and to force the Department to move again on desegregation after it had let the Title VI mechanism fall into disuse.

There's not much other government action in support of desegregation. Quite the contrary. Under Attorney General Edward Levi, the Justice Department is considering a course of action that could do more to weaken desegregation efforts than anything attempted by his predecessors in the Nixon-Ford administrations. As far back as December 1975, Levi signaled his intentions. Then, at a meeting with a civil rights delegation, he suggested that the Department was rethinking the whole desegregation issue and might even seek a judicial reexamination of the *Swann* decision on busing. He drew back from that position in the face of the outcry he provoked. But it was only a temporary retreat. In May 1976 he let it be known that he was thinking of intervening in the *Boston* case. He probably drew back from that because he was persuaded it was strategically unwise, because civil rights leaders shook him by suggesting such a move might encourage resistance and even fresh violence, and perhaps also because a number

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of his legal peers questioned the wisdom of what he seemed to have in mind. Nevertheless, he has let it be known he is still looking for a case in which to intervene and seek a rethinking of the busing remedy. With Ford's prompting, the Department has drafted an "antibusing" bill that the President has sent to Congress.

As for the President, there is nothing new in his opposition to busing. The conventional notion that, on the issue of desegregation, he was trying to "put himself to the right of Ronald Reagan," is false. In the White House he continues to take the positions he took in the House. As Republican leader, he led the opposition to almost every major civil rights bill. His pronouncements as president are in the same vein. Like Nixon, he professes to be for law and order but against "court-ordered forced busing"[3]—which is a bit like saying he's all for using the courts to stamp out crime so long as they do not seek, by sentence or order, to force criminals to give up their errant ways.

Wavering on desegregation is evident in Congress, too. In almost every session since the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, there have been moves to thwart desegregation, usually by putting curbs on HEW's power to enforce Title VI. Initiated first by Dixiecrats, these moves have picked up northern supporters as desegregation suits have moved North. Liberals like Jim O'Hara, Lucien Nedzi, and William Ford, all from Michigan, now work hand-in-glove with the segregationists. For years it has been customary in Congress for House opponents of desegregation to offer some wildly irresponsible and unconstitutional "antibusing" amendment to a bill, get it adopted in floor debate, and then have it modified in the cooler atmosphere of the Senate, through the addition of a "nullifier," a phrase that squared whatever the House had adopted with the requirements of *Brown* and the Constitution. Last year's antibusing action by the Senate is probably more significant as a portent than as a matter of practical consequence. The amendment that Majority Whip Robert C. Byrd succeeded in adding to the HEW appropriations bill for fiscal 1976 instructs the Department not to deny funds to a school district that refuses to transport students beyond the schools nearest their homes, even if more busing is needed to desegregate a system.

Since there was very little money for education in the bill; since HEW has virtually stopped cutting off funds to resisting districts; and since most "busing" orders nowadays come from the courts and not the Department, it can be argued that the net effect of the Byrd Amendment is small, no matter how much political hay its sponsor made with it. What is disquieting, however, is the new alignment of forces. For the fight to impose a restraint was begun not by Senator Byrd but by Senator Joseph Biden, generally considered to be a liberal Democrat. He was reacting, plainly, to the busing furor in his state of Delaware. The liberals who joined him in his fight, for motives not unlike his own, may foreshadow a shift that could eventually do more damage to desegregation than the Byrd Amendment does.

One of those who shifted was Senator Henry Jackson, prompted, no doubt, by his presidential ambitions. Two others were Senators Stuart Symington and Thomas Eagleton, responding to antibusing pressures in Missouri. Still another was Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, prompted as is often the case, by his own mysterious urges, since busing is no issue in Montana. Most egregious among the shifts was probably Tom Eagleton's, for he counts for something among the liberals. He not only voted for the Byrd Amendment; he compounded his defection by making a long speech in defense of its constitutionality.

[3]At a meeting between the President and civil rights leaders in June of this year, in which Ford was urged to abandon his antibusing strategy, Clarence Mitchell, the NAACP's lobbyist, observed that when the President used the term "forced busing" he should know it struck "wells of deepest anger in black people." Ford listened, thanked Mitchell—and, of course, continued to use the term. Perhaps only in a country as used to fakes and substitutes as ours could Gerald Ford's "decency and integrity" still strike millions of people as the real thing.

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III

Unquestionably, since 1954, the drive to dismantle the dual school system has lost momentum. How far have we progressed toward that goal and how far short are we of reaching it?

In the South there has been substantial progress. The proportion of black students attending predominantly white schools there has increased from less than 19 percent in 1968 to more than 44 percent in 1974. In the North, however, the proportion of black students attending predominantly white schools increased less than one percent between 1968 and 1972 and has changed little since then. In 1972 more than 71 percent of the black students in the North continued to attend predominantly black schools. At the same time, segregation of our second largest student minority, Latin children, has increased in all regions of the nation.

On the basis of these estimates from HEW and the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, there is still a long way to go. And the going is getting harder. Residential segregation is correctly seen as the main reason why busing is often the only way to desegregate the school system in large urban areas. In a study he did last year,[4] Associate Director of the Populations Studies Center at the University of Michigan Reynolds Farley notes that in the nation's 15 largest cities, the rate of racial residential segregation ranges from 97 percent in Dallas to 75 percent in San Francisco. Farley's conclusion is bleak: "Residential segregation makes school integration more difficult to accomplish, and as the proportion of black students in large school districts increases, it will become necessary to bus more and more children longer distances to achieve integration of the schools."

Complicating this unpromising situation are what sociologists call "second generation" desegregation problems: the possibility that the South is moving toward the northern pattern of residential segregation; the drop in white enrollment in 60 of the nation's 76 largest school districts; the growth of racially segregated private academies and parochial schools; and the resistance within some desegregated schools that shows itself in tracking and ability grouping and in the disproportionately large suspension and expulsion of minority students.

If despite this array of problems we still accept the proposition that integrated schools constitute an important, desirable, even "crucial" goal, as Derrick Bell once said, then where do we turn to for guidance and solutions?

IV

Consider the situation in Congress. Three groups are in contention there: those embattled liberals who are opposed to any congressional intervention, those who seek to stop desegregation, and those few who are making an effort, sometimes even a genuine effort, to formulate a national plan. Lately the opponents of desegregation seem to be winning—at least through the addition of "antibusing" amendments to pending bills. Their big gun—a constitutional amendment that would foreclose busing as one of the means available for desegregating schools—appears to be spiked. There is a strong suspicion among civil rights lobbyists that, while there may be majorities in the House and Senate for antibusing riders, the two-thirds necessary to amend the Constitution would not be forthcoming. The present strategy is to keep desegregation bills and antibusing amendments bottled up in committee and avoid a showdown.

Legislative plans for effecting desegregation on a nationwide basis have been introduced in both the House and Senate. While some are well-intentioned, the net effect of almost all would be to hamper the courts. The newest one was sent to Congress by the Administration on June 24; the oldest is a bill introduced by Rep. Richardson Preyer (D., N.C.) and a growing number of cosponsors.

The Ford bill was accompanied by what has become a genre piece for all such

[4] *Duke University Law Review*, Winter 1975.

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legislation—a statement professing the sponsor's commitment to "equality of education" for all Americans; a rejection of racial discrimination and violence; and a recital of provisions that can only curtail or deny educational opportunity to minority youngsters.

Mr. Ford's bill proposes to do three things: (1) limit "court-ordered busing" to a specific period of time—no more than five years; (2) require the courts to concentrate on determining what unlawful acts by school officials have resulted in racially segregated schools; and (3) limit the use of busing and other remedies to those schools that have become segregated through proven acts of unlawful discrimination. The five-year limit flies in the face of recognition by both the Supreme Court and the Solicitor General, expressed in a recent brief, that a court must have flexibility and the right to continued supervision in devising a school desegregation plan. The second proposal would tend to exclude from a court's consideration the effects on schools of discriminatory governmental policies in housing, zoning, etc., even though the Supreme Court has upheld the relevance of considering such policies in school desegregation cases. The third seems to disregard the Supreme Court's ruling in the *Denver* case, that unlawful segregation in a significant portion of a school district may raise a presumption that the entire system is similarly segregated.

Ford's bill can be dismissed for what it is—an attempt to use the busing issue for political advantage. Preyer's bill is harder to dismiss. His search for alternatives to the present arrangement of leaving desegregation largely to the judgments of the courts (enabling some members to use federal judges as congressional whipping boys) is no doubt sincere. His bill was developed by the late Alexander Bickel. Morris Udall is one of his cosponsors. For a while, until civil rights activists protested, his cosponsors included Barbara Jordan of Houston and Andrew Young of Atlanta, reacting, one supposes, to difficult busing situations back home. Briefly, the Preyer bill would require each state to develop a plan to effect desegregation of its schools within the next five years; it sets forth guidelines for them to follow and provides funds to help them accomplish their plans. This is a more thoughtful bill than Ford's but it, too, has defects; it would complicate and delay present methods of desegregation and create new loopholes for school districts that want to evade desegregation.

Among other current legislative proposals, one being offered by Senator John Glenn (D., Ohio), seems the least objectionable. This would simply make $2.25 billion available over the next three fiscal years to encourage development of "innovative desegregation programs and procedures." But though civil rights groups have no trouble with this, Glenn's bill and Preyer's and others like them are all based on a shaky premise: that it is possible to enact rational federal legislation on the subject. It is doubtful that this can be done. The best—or simplest—bill imaginable, once it hits the floor of the House or Senate, would be subject to amendment. It is the fear of the NAACP's Clarence Mitchell, who leads those of us who lobby for civil rights in Washington, that any bill would then become the vehicle for something worse. Anyone who has witnessed the harrowing floor fights on antibusing amendments must recognize the accuracy of his apprehension. Last year, for instance, Rep. James Collins (R., Tex.) succeeded in adding to an energy conservation bill a rider that prohibits the use of any gasoline or Diesel fuel-powered vehicle to transport any public school student, other than one's own child, to a school further than the one closest to his home—at a penalty of $5,000 for each violation. This year, the House added three amendments to education legislation that would, among other things, force HEW to continue to give funds to school districts that are discriminating against minorities and women.

Given the prospect of such insulting changes in any bill, the best we can hope for are no bills at all. A vulnerable and defensive position, but a realistic one.

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V

If Congress is not the forum, where else can the issue be discussed sensibly? Surely not in the debates of an election year. There were no heroes on "busing" among the candidates running in the primaries. And there is little likelihood that the presidential candidates will discuss the issue in any calm or constructive way.

At the National Democratic Issues Convention in Louisville last November a former presidential candidate, George McGovern, took the floor to warn that for Democrats "busing" could be the new Vietnam. He said:

> Busing is one way to pay the bill for the ancient regime of racism. There may be other ways, but none of them will be painless or priceless. Indeed if we abandoned the goal of integration, if we tried to be separate but become equal, we would have to reduce spending for each student in the suburbs—or we would have to raise those who now have the least to the level of the most expensive public education. I have never seen an appropriation to make it a meaningful reality for every student in America.

It was a good speech—and an irritating one. For McGovern had nothing to lose. And his admonition to announced candidates to speak out on busing came with poor grace when one remembers how he himself waffled on the issue in 1972.

It would have been a fine thing if any of the Democratic candidates for president had spoken as much harsh sense on the subject as McGovern did—if Jimmy Carter would do so now. But during the primaries Carter ducked the issue, saying only that he was for "voluntary busing" of the sort they had back home, a plan that has caused much rancor in the black community in Atlanta and has generally been considered ineffective by the courts. The Democratic party plank on the subject is a fairly good one, and perhaps the most we can expect is Carter's support of it.

If we cannot look to Congress for leadership and probably not to Jimmy Carter, and surely not to the Ford White House, we must come back to the courts. James Coleman said in a speech, "the courts are probably the worst instrument of social policy." To paraphrase Winston Churchill's remark about democracy, they are—until you compare them to the others. Then the courts appear to be about the only workable instrument we have. Why do federal judges who impose busing plans on angry communities rule as they do? Surely not because they are pointy-headed radicals and "social experimenters." Judge Garrity ordered a desegregation plan involving busing for the schools of Boston because he found that "the defendents [the Boston School Committee and administration] have knowingly carried out a systematic program of segregation affecting all of the city's students, teachers, and school facilities and have intentionally brought about and maintained a dual school system."

The courts continue to generate practically the only progress toward desegregation that we are making. In defense of this slow, case-by-case approach, Professor Norman Amker of Rutgers, at a U.S. Civil Rights Commission conference last year, observed:

> . . . only a rule of law which has told the lower federal courts to use their common sense to work out solutions to school segregation problems, and that the way to evaluate desegregation plans is to observe whether or not they really worked to bring about integration, has broken through the miasma of calculated analytical confusion which is used to defend segregation laws and practices.

It is tempting and probably useless to think of what might be done through the courts. A shift of one vote in the Supreme Court's ruling in the *Detroit* case would have sparked the formulation of metropolitanwide desegregation plans in large urban areas throughout the country. For in such areas, joining city and suburbs into a single system appears to offer the only effective way to counter white evasion.

The issue is not dead. It will be raised again in other school cases now moving up to the Supreme Court. There have been some hopeful signs since the *Detroit* decision. Last year, in the Wilmington case, the Court

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affirmed a lower court decision leading to metropolitan desegregation; and in the Louisville case, it refused to review a decision calling for interdistrict desegregation. In April of this year, in the *Gautreaux* case, the Court made clear that its prohibitions against an interdistrict plan for school desegregation did not preclude interdistrict plans for public housing, specifically for Chicago and its suburbs. And in New Jersey, two state courts struck down restrictive zone ordinances designed to keep out the poor (blacks). There may be hopeful implications in these rulings for school desegregation. It is also heartening to note that the Court refused to review the *Boston* case. It is encouraging, too, to note the Court's 7-to-2 ruling in June that private schools cannot deny admission to black applicants. Yet with William O. Douglas gone and the position of Judge John Paul Stevens as yet unknown, one cannot predict what the Court will do in upcoming school cases.

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VI

Where does that leave us, then, those of us still committed to the principles of the *Brown* decision? In arguing our position to doubters and the unconvinced, we should begin with the reminder that the issue is not "busing" and certainly not "forced busing," that foolish and deliberately misleading term. No; the issue is and has been integration and whether we, as a nation, are willing to pay the heavy price, socially and financially, to achieve it. Representative Preyer speaks for many politicians and waverers when he talks of "reducing the emphasis on court-ordered busing and increasing the reliance on alternative methods chosen and developed locally." But contrary to the impression this creates, this is what the courts have always done. Everywhere, they seek to find local alternatives and where they cannot, they order busing as a last resort. They have ordered a surprisingly small amount of it.

More than 43 percent of all the public students in this country are transported to school; less than 4 percent of them are traveling to comply with school desegregation orders. In fact, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission points out, desegregation has reduced busing in many areas of the South where it was once used to keep schools segregated,[5] and many of the newly created segregated private schools are often dependent on busing.[6]

The argument that opponents of desegregation sometimes make, that it is insulting to assume that blacks can learn only when they are seated next to whites, must be seen for what it is: diversionary nonsense. In the first

[5]To those who raise objections to the cost of busing for desegregation, it should be pointed out what busing for segregation used to cost. In his book on the *Brown* case, *Simple Justice*, Richard Kluger notes: "In 1944, the seventeen segregating states spent a total of $42 million busing white children to their schools; on transporting colored children, they spent a little more than one million dollars."

[6]The U.S. Civil Rights Commission estimates that "if busing were increased only three percent and school attendance areas rearranged to promote integration, even in the largest cities, the number of black students attending majority-white schools would increase to over 70 percent."

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school cases, those coming from the South, the differences between white and black schools were stark enough to convince all but the most myopic judges that separate but equal does not work. It doesn't work in the North, either. Perhaps the black students being bused to South Boston are going to schools no better than the ones they've left behind. But in most places the white schools are better than the black ones, and will be as long as school boards and state education agencies are controlled by whites. Only integration can effectively lessen that control.

We may have no recourse, then, except to fight defensive actions in Congress and, in those communities where busing emerges as an issue, simply to stand firm. These methods are not to be despised. Standing firm can have a marvelously calming effect, as George Meany and Leonard Woodcock demonstrated in Louisville. Their insistence that union members there comply with the AFL-CIO's and the UAW's national policy—to recognize and support busing as one means among others for giving students their constitutional rights—quenched a rebellion in the rank and file. Desegregation in Louisville, these days, seems to be proceeding fairly well.

While national attention focuses on the outcries and occasional violence, more and more communities are quietly accommodating to desegregation orders that require some transportation of students. One hardly expected in 1971 that children from Charlotte would be coming north in 1975 to instruct Boston youngsters on how to live with busing. And now that the turmoil in Pontiac has died down and the protesters have stopped burning buses and launching petition campaigns to recall one of the bravest men in the U.S. Senate, Philip Hart, parents and students in that city are learning to live with integrated schools. There and in a growing number of communities we see significant and heartening successes. If they do not draw the media attention that a Ford statement against busing does, they mean more. For these communities are becoming the laboratories for learning how to make integration work.

Perhaps this has the sound of accepting too little. But integration in this country has always had to be won against enormous odds; on too many heartbreaking occasions it has had to mark time against the moment when an opportunity could be seized to make a major gain—as in the *Brown* decision. Those opportunities will come again—perhaps through legislation but more likely through some as yet unforeseen breakthrough in the courts. If, in the meantime, we advocate compensatory education for students trapped in inner city schools, it must be done in full recognition that this is an expedient against the time when integration can be achieved. We must also recognize, to the understandable despair of many of us, that in this sad time all we may be able to do is inch toward integration; that each advance may be offset, somewhere, by a defeat; and that the forces of opposition may still win the day and leave us, finally, with a handful of token victories. Even so, how can the commitment to equality be less than absolute? □

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Bill Goode

The Skilled Auto Worker: A Social Portrait

Before the organization of industrial unions, skilled workers in America were truly an "aristocracy of labor." Commanding higher wages and a near-monopoly with their skills, they worked in isolation from the rest of the American work force. Most of the skilled workers were building tradesmen or members of craft unions such as the Railroad Engineers.

With the advent of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the skilled workers in the auto shops were organized for the first time. Disdained by the old AFL, they had never experienced the privileges or exclusiveness of their counterparts on the "outside." As industrial workers, they were organized into the same union as production workers. Consequently, the skilled auto worker looked both ways, "outside" to his peers in the craft unions and "inside" to his fellow unionists in the UAW.

Almost all auto workers, if given a chance, would exchange places with the skilled tradesmen in their shop. The pay is better and, perhaps because of that, there is more status. Skilled workers are more apt to get precious overtime. But the most envied aspect of skilled work is its apparent freedom. There is nothing to compare with the relentless tedium of a moving assembly line or the demands of an hourly production quota.

For the production worker, the skilled tradesmen seem singularly free from the urgent demands of assembly work. They seem to be walking around the plant all day, perhaps carrying some tools, perhaps pushing their wagon of tools and fittings. (When I became an apprentice I remember feeling that those damned draftsmen and engineers never seemed to be busy.)

In the Big Three shops, the skilled 15 percent of the work force are envied for their freedom, their pay, and their perceived better working conditions. As of September 1975, major assemblers in the auto plants made about $5.25 an hour, plus an 84¢ cost-of-living float—a total of $6.19 an hour. They also have perhaps the finest fringe benefits in industry, medical and dental coverage, a retirement plan, and life insurance.

The skilled worker's pay varies by classification. An electrician now makes about $7.56 an hour. A toolmaker is paid 10¢ an hour more. A millwright makes about $7.32 an hour. The differential of between a dollar and a dollar and a half an hour is a source of irritation to the unskilled worker. Every negotiation in the auto industry is marked by low-level grumbling about the differential, and occasionally that erupts into a major battle within the union.

Although this division along skill lines is a

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problem for the union, every attempt to organize the skilled workers into a separate union has failed. Industrial unionism is the overwhelming choice of both production and skilled workers in the auto industry.

One accommodation the UAW has had to make is to grant the skilled tradesmen the right to separate ratification of contracts. This has been criticized by some as a step backward from the original purity of industrial unionism. Perhaps; but it has given the skilled workers a stronger sense of identity and a recognition of their own problems.

One aspect of skilled work that production workers do not usually experience is dirt. With the exception of a few jobs (gauge inspectors, for example), skilled work is filthy. The maintenance and construction crews work in places that in most shops are usually not cleaned: underground, under floors, in the air around pipes and conduits that may not have been touched in years. Oil is everywhere. Solvent cleaners and harsh soaps are used to get exposed parts of the body clean. Compressed air is used to get dirt out of coveralls. Even the toolmakers have to handle materials covered with oil. The skilled worker carries the marks of his trade under his fingernails and in the creases of his hands.

While production workers look to the skilled workers, the skilled workers look outside at their peers in the building trades who make approximately $12.00 an hour. They see the high wages in the building trades but do not see the seasonal nature of that work, the fact that it is usually not done in a closed building, and that it is harder because there are no lulls caused by the need to service a production facility.

Next to overtime grievances, the most vexing problem for a skilled committeeman or steward is outside contracting of work within a plant.

I remember that this meant every time a rigging company came into our shop to move a group of machines our crew lost that work and the possibility of overtime. But, more important, it was a blow to the pride of the regular workers. There is probably a sound economic reason for the contracts, having to do with fringe benefits for new workers if the job is too large for the existing crew. Just as there probably is sound economic reason for forcing men to work overtime instead of putting on more men or another shift. But to the workers contracting is an affront, a slur on their skills, and, besides, "they pay them more!" Usually, in our shop, adequate men and equipment existed to cover the job. Certainly, a capricious management was responsible for much of this activity, too central to the workers' experience to be so lightly used. Discussions with the union are necessary prior to letting a contract. But discussions with the workers would also prove of value.

Sometimes craftsmen from the outside world came to work inside the plants. They never left. All of the enticements of outside work, high wages and all, could not get them to leave. For the shops represented security, a very real security. Journeymen in auto shops often have 10 to 40 years seniority in one place, while skilled outside men brag about working a year and a half on one location.

Occasionally, there would be movement from within the shop to the outside. One electrician in our gang was offered a job on the outside, working on permit. (Work permits are granted by the craft union to some nonmembers when the job market is good, but you can seldom get a regular journeyman's card regardless of how long the job lasts.) He was also given a conditional promise that a card would be wangled for him in a few months (or years). This was chancy and he knew it, but his ambition was to have a shop of his own.

Despite the apparent envy of the skilled men of their counterparts on the outside, this electrician anguished for days over the decision. It meant giving up his seniority, assuring him of a steady job; it meant risk, and he could not possibly foresee its outcome. He took the job and, given the casual nature of relationships in a large industrial city, we never heard of him again. At least, we know

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he did not subsequently apply for a job at our plant.

Getting out of the shops to a better job grinds less on the skilled group than on production workers, but it does exist for the skilled worker too. In my decade at Ford at Highland Park, only one skilled trade committeeman quit. His family was involved in a prosperous retail outlet, and he first took a leave for several months. Then he returned for a similar period. Finally, he left to join the family business. Part of the trouble is the jealously guarded seniority list. There are provisions in the contract for union leaves and personal leaves, but workers do not readily accept the idea that someone who is gainfully employed on the outside should have his seniority remain intact.

Education was recognized as a way to escape from the shops, and education was prized even if it did not achieve this end. An articulate, knowledgeable worker was respected. During the Korean War a new employee in his early forties made a literate, effective speech at a local meeting. Anticipating the other members, he asked rhetorically, "You're probably thinking, what's he doing working in a factory?"

He was right; that was exactly the question in many minds. Some grumbled that the Communist party had probably planted him. Education was admired and respected but there was also considerable ambivalence about the literate folk.

On Monday mornings I occasionally took a section of the *New York Times* into work to read at lunch. As the only apprentice and the youngest man in the gang, this gave rise to some good-natured raillery. "Hey, Goode, what kind of Communist literature you bringing in now?"

One of the best mechanics and most respected fitters in the gang made a public defense of my reading habits. He told me later in private: "Don't let them kid you. I always read the financial pages of the *Times*. My girl friend lived in Detroit and I came here to get married, never expecting to stay 35 years. But I got out of World War I, made a bad investment with my money, and here I am."

"What did you invest in, Jimmy?"

"Czarist rubles," was the reply.

The tradition of the old mechanic, self-taught and job-trained, is disappearing. A system of apprenticeships is replacing it. Young men are now given a grounding in mathematics, physics, and the theory of the trade. The reaction to this new way of doing things is varied. Some apprentices "took low" and dutifully went to the crib to get a left-handed monkey wrench or went on other fool's errands because it was expected of them. They played their role. Others rebelled against the older men and fought back. One apprentice, not so innocently, asked the only master plumber in the gang how he could possibly consider himself a master without ever having taken a course in trigonometry. That bit of baiting caused an immediate explosion. The old mechanic in a few hundred well-chosen words told the "young punk" where he could shove his "trigolometry."

Comparable to the permit worker on the outside are the upgraders or Employees in Training (EIT). When there is a major move or model change, production workers with some experience are brought into the skilled trades to supply the necessary manpower. They last for as long as there is work to do and then go back to their old jobs. This often makes for uneasiness. It is obvious that skilled workers want the production worker to get a break, but they also jealously guard their craft and carefully watch the seniority list to see that their position is maintained.

The life of an assembler on the line has been recorded by many authors, but there have been few observers of the skilled trades in the auto plants. Given all of the material on the "iron horse" of the assembly line, little has been written about the interaction among workers. Assemblers, the intrinsic nature of the job apart, simply have more fun. There is a spontaneity about the play on a line that is unmatched by skilled work.

An assembly line always has materials for

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involved horseplay: tubing, metal washers, bolts, empty kegs, all provide the materials for elaborate gags. This play is largely slapstick, never subtle, and often with more than a touch of malice. A handful of washers on a steel floor is enough to tip over a cart that a worker must sit on to wheel himself under a car body. Tubing and cold water provide great, if not delicate, possibilities for humor.

There are always conycatchers on the line, those verbal con men who can convince the village idiot that there are oil deposits under his house lot and that people are out to steal it. Or the deflator tells the macho bear killer that his prize must have been about the size of a small dog. "Did the cub come up and lick your hand before you shot it?" It is hard to tell whether the fool is as innocent of wit as it seems or is just playing a role—still, it helps kill time in a pleasant way.

For the auto worker killing time is a real problem, particularly for the skilled worker. Stories about doubling up on a moving line always leave out something. There are tales telling that two workers can handle each other's jobs, one doing two jobs, while the other loafs. Four hours work, eight hours pay. But in truth there is no assembly line in any auto plant where it is possible to double up for more than a few minutes at a time. The extra burst of energy needed to do this can be invigorating for a little while, but it is sure to be killing over a long period.

Skilled work, by contrast, is spasmodic. There is a division between the maintenance and construction crew (electricians, pipe fitters, millwrights, riggers, the building trades) and the tool and die section (toolmakers, machine hands and machine repairmen). The work flow for the tool section tends to be more regular, work for the maintenance men depends on breakdowns or need for new installations of air lines or water, installing new machinery, or changing lines.

Maintenance work is hard work, physically exhausting, and often demanding great strength. Pipe fitters, in self-denigration, refer to the necessary attributes of their trade as "a strong back and a weak mind." The tool and die section is always considered the prestigious part of skilled work.

A break from hard work would seem to be a treat, but most workers are so defensive about loafing that they create elaborate rationales excusing a lack of work for which they have neither responsibility nor control. The most common excuse is: "When I'm sitting on my ass the company is making money; when I have to work it means something is broken down and the company is losing money."

The vast majority of skilled workers believe in hard work and take pride in it. The "good mechanic" has a special status in the shops, no matter how ill-natured or even antiunion he may be. His opposite, the "shoe-maker" or less talented worker, is given short shrift. But the most despised worker is the lazy one. It is often said of stewards or committeemen that no one could get any work out of them anyway, so the department elected them to office.

Much of the attitude toward work evinced by older workers is partly a result of the old brutal, preunion days in the shops. A fitter once told me never to be caught sitting down. If you have no job at the time, stand at your bench with a piece of wire in your hand so you can always say that you were making a pipe hanger in case you were asked by anyone.

Something there is that doesn't like an idle worker—mostly supervision. The sight of a sitting tradesman can produce great anxiety in a boss, particularly a superintendent or general foreman. In reality, the work flow is not evenly distributed in time, and on occasion workers may not have an assignment. Consequently the foreman is placed in the position of creating make-work or telling the crew to hide. In the workers' view, this is sanctioned loafing time. The foreman usually knows where his men are hiding or tells them to come back in an hour. A foreman who has worked for a long time with a crew knows their hiding places anyhow. He probably shared them when he was in overalls.

The subterfuges extend even when working. One of the decentest human beings I have ever known was a great ex-pug (Ford's was

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full of them) who had fought in Harry Greb's stable. We were working off of the assignment board one day, doing maintenance jobs as things broke down. We had a fairly busy day and every time a job came up he told me to get the tools and a plunger. After several jobs we had a call to fix a drinking fountain. The orders were the same, "get the plunger." I said, "Bricky, what do we need a plunger for to repair a water fountain?" He looked at me with great scorn. "When are you going to grow up? Don't you know that nobody ever asks a pipe fitter where he's going if he has a plunger over his shoulder?" This is the way apprentices learn.

While skilled workers dislike a lazy worker, they do enjoy a monumental ripoff of the company. There is usually a lull in work just prior to a model changeover. Major changes are in the offing and things are generally in good shape. Supervision tends to get sloppy and the atmosphere is relaxed and easygoing. Once, two millwrights had found an old-time clock and, being good mechanics, they got it into working order. For a month they came in late and left early, setting the clock to the time they wanted, punching their time cards and leaving them in the rack. This required considerable ingenuity because they had to know when the timekeeper was going to pick up their cards. They were admired for their audacity by the rest of the crew because they beat the company at their own game. They used the resented clock, the worst of the surveillance mechanisms, to defeat the company.

There was the usual amount of drinking during the work day, usually at lunchtime, but seldom did workers bring a bottle on the job. Because of the different shifts in a large plant, workers streamed in and out constantly. If a crew had a few beers at lunch they may have decided to extend their 30-minute lunch to an hour. When they got caught, the committeeman had to do a "kneepad job," that is, try to wheedle the supervisor or labor relations man into forgiving the offense without a penalty. These negotiations were usually cajolery, the union pleading *non compos mentis* or chronic alcoholism as a defense. These minor infractions resulted in a network of mutual obligation and reciprocity between the union and management. It takes considerable skill to operate in this setting without one party completely dominating the other. This entirely justified trading-off kept the already crowded grievance procedure relatively free of minor cases.

Working with a drunk partner is at best a terrible inconvenience and at worst very dangerous. If you are working on the ground, the rhythm of work is disturbed. Ordinary mechanical operations become matters of great concentration for the drinker and great exasperation for his partner. If you are working in the air the problem is critical. A wrench dropped from even 10 feet up can fracture a skull. Occasionally, workers will refuse to work with someone who has been drinking. A drunken crane operator, lifting heavy loads in a bay that may be two to six floors high, is a positive menace. Now most new plants are one-floor structures, but older plants were built up rather than out.

Drinking and loafing both are ways of killing time. The point is just to make it to 3:30, the end of the shift. Even if it were possible to find a hole to sleep in, rest is not the point, only killing time. For some, work discipline is maintained by external authority, a hectoring foreman. For some, the discipline

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is internalized, almost a compulsion to keep busy and do your job. For a small percentage (far too few) the motivation is pleasure, the sheer joy of working at a job they genuinely like.

The ambivalence toward work is best illustrated by the attitude toward those elected to union office. If someone is defeated in an election, they "go back to work." Union activity is not considered work. Work is by nature arduous and onerous. If it is not hard and dirty, it's not work. Highland Park, Michigan, an enclave inside Detroit, was for years a center of the Finnish community. There was a strong evangelical, low-church religious belief among many Finns. It was interesting to hear two old friends raised in the same neighborhood, both intensely religious, discuss the nature of work.

Someone was asked one day at lunch whether there would be work in heaven. The answers were instantaneous and diametrically opposed. One maintained that work was punishment for the sin of Adam and Eve and that, of course, there would be no work in heaven. The other asserted with equal vehemence that work was fulfillment, that it was man's nature to work and there would certainly be work in heaven. The argument raged all that lunch hour and it was probably one of the most interesting debates I have heard on the nature of work, certainly surpassing much of the disputations in sociological circles.

The racial harmony in our gang in the old days was unbelievable, compared to today's relationships. It was an artificial situation, a compound of company paternalism and a high-seniority group with long experience working together. Old man Ford always had a *numerus clausus* for blacks in his plants. Our skilled group was 10 percent black, which about reflected the general population figures but did not reflect the population of Detroit.

Fifteen years after the event, white tradesmen recalled with indignation a white brother who cavilled at contributing money for a watch traditionally given to workers going into the Army during World War II because the worker was black. There was just something too damned unfair about it that these workers resented. On one occasion hundreds of workers stormed over to the union hall on a wildcat when it was thought that one of the highest seniority blacks was being denied his rights on shift preference. It will be many years before such days return again.

Of equal interest would be to watch the reaction of skilled workers as women first invade the nonapprenticeable trades, tool-grinding and others, and eventually reach into the construction trades. That would be a dandy to see.

The skilled trades in the auto industry are harassed by the same problems facing all workers—layoffs, racial friction, and the growing demands of women for entrance into this previously exclusively male group. But they have their peculiar problems too. A new technology will create new trades, new skills that will challenge the old rankings.

Bull work, the back-breaking, heavy work, is disappearing from the shops, and automation will continue to decrease the difference between production and skilled work. Paradoxically, all work will become more sophisticated, presumably to disappear into a monitoring function. The number of auto workers will not increase at the same rate as the work force. There will be less looking to the outside to gauge their success and a greater disposition to accommodate to the rising skill level of all work.

But the assembly line will be with us for a while and the distinction between production worker and skilled worker will continue. While there may be no work in heaven, there will be plenty of it on earth, and the skilled worker has much the better of it. Uneasy, threatened and yet proud of his work, the tradesman represents a great tradition in American working-class life. □

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Philip Green

IQ and the Future of Equality

This article is the last of three dealing with the subject of Genetics, IQ, and Equality. The first, entitled "Race and IQ: Fallacy of Heritability," appeared in our spring issue; the second, "The Pseudoscience of Arthur Jensen," in the summer issue. The notes to this article appear on pp. 413-14. — Eds.

In the furor stirred up by the new inegalitarians' contention that differences in intelligence are inherent, most of the notoriety has gone to Arthur Jensen's allegation that heredity accounts for the average IQ gap between America's blacks and whites. In two previous articles in these pages, I have demonstrated that Jensen's theorizing is tendentious or incompetent and his "empirical" case fraudulent; if the argument about the supposedly genetic roots of inequality is to proceed any further on a rational basis, it must do so without reference to the subject of race.

A much more grandiose assault has been made on egalitarianism by Jensen himself and, more prominently, by the psychologist Richard Herrnstein. Herrnstein avoids Jensen's conclusions about race but links the notion of the genetic determination of IQ with a peculiar use of the conceptual category, "social class." He not only posits the existence of a lower class as a permanent phenomenon in technologically complex societies but argues that egalitarianism would make class stratification even worse than it need be. Clearly, if Herrnstein's argument is correct, egalitarians are caught up in a paradoxical position. Like Jensen's argument, however, Herrnstein's is false; and also like Jensen's, it is sometimes foolishly false.[1]

According to Herrnstein, if we concede that there is *any* significant hereditary component in intelligence, we face a dilemma.[2] The more "equal opportunity" is realized in a society, the more will distinctions between people with respect to their capacities to perform needed social tasks be traceable solely to the genetic differences between them. Some individuals will, inherently, be capable of doing the most complex types of work; others will not. Those who are capable will *naturally* be rewarded more than the less capable or incapable. The resulting differential reward structure will be seen as "rational" or "fair," since it will not be linked to the vagaries of an unequal environment. If people have observably unequal capacities, it will not be because their parents could afford different kinds of education, health, etc., but solely because of their genetic constitutions—which reformers will not feel as free to "reform" as they would different environmental backgrounds.

Finally, those who possess differential capacities will constitute permanent social classes. Given truly "equal" opportunity, those capable of upward social mobility will escape from the lower class. A good portion of those with intellectual capacities genetically below the competence level will remain behind and marry each other; they will create a class, perpetuated by their children whose own intelligence will also be below competence level, and so on and on. Thus the

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egalitarian drive to reform the environment so as to make it more equal for all will paradoxically but necessarily result in the creation of a self-reproducing lower class.

II

Let us now phrase Herrnstein's assertion as a question. Suppose we could eliminate or attenuate the effects of our present social environment on differential social class behaviors—would then "assortative mating" (for intelligence) come to hold the determinative role that now is held by the nongenetic determinants of class membership?[3] Merely to ask the question in this way is to highlight the outlandish quality of Herrnstein's reasoning. If we do away with the effective impact of social class, how then can something have a determinative role in distributing that impact?

On even the most casual inspection, it is apparent that Herrnstein is only playing with words—and playing badly (violating the rules of the game, one might say). Equal opportunity carried to its consistent extreme—that is, to the point where so much equalization has taken place that no one has a real advantage over anyone else by virtue of birth—means in effect, for this society, that everyone would be provided with roughly as supportive an environment as that in which the average middle-class white American child grows up today. Egalitarians hope to accomplish this by eliminating or controlling the pathology-inducing conditions of social life—nutritional deficiencies, inadequate health care, alienation from educational and social institutions, discrimination in job markets, etc. According to Herrnstein they will, if they accomplish this program, have effectively equalized the effects of environment.

But this is nonsense. "Equal opportunity" in American parlance, or in the minds of the French revolutionaries who created the slogan of careers open to the talents, is a legal or (more recently) a sociological norm, not at all a factual description of human lives. Even the most radical policy of equalizing the conditions under which we all begin the struggle of life only means equalizing certain *institutionalized* conditions that can be affected by social and economic policy; it does not mean that we all become the same person with one uniform life-style.

Herrnstein, that is, confuses our "environment" with certain shorthand descriptions of it that we invent for ideological or scholarly purposes. "Social class" is only an analytic category at a fairly high level of abstraction, created by human beings in order to help us understand what we do to each other *en masse*. Social or economic positions are not in themselves "environments"; they are merely crude guides to averagely different life experiences that, for some reason or another, we wish to be aware of. But suppose we smooth over the differences between the various averagely different life-styles; suppose we moderate the particular influences, born of relative deprivation, that provide some people with an averagely worse life than others. We will in no way have eliminated the differences in or even the pathologies of social life. We will simply have insured that the difference and especially the pathologies will occur less often (much less often, we hope), and that sociologically their incidence will have been randomized, rather than associated more or less with particular, identifiable groups of people—"classes."

Thus there will always be medical danger signals that go unheeded; there will always be parents who for one reason or another do not adequately stimulate all or some of their children, or who pass on their own dislike of schooling to their children, or who have objectively unfounded low valuations of the future they pass on to their children; there will always be "bad company" for some children to fall into. The human environment contains hundreds of thousands of features that impinge on our development. Some of them are associated with social class membership and some not; but none are associated *exclusively* with social class membership. There are millions and millions of people in any categorically described "social class" whose actual lives are not comprehended by

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some or all of the correlations associated with membership in that class.

It is true, to some extent (no one is sure what extent) various behavioral patterns are on the average associated not only with IQ score but also with social class identity. But that is only because in an inegalitarian society our social class positions are such important influences on our lives. If we eliminated those particular influences—if we eliminated serious deprivation (absolute or relative) and class or caste discrimination—the stimulating or retarding effects of our environments would hardly be eliminated; they might not even be attenuated. But they would most certainly be redistributed. They would be found in different places and manifested in different ways than is presently the case.

In other words, once the influences of environment are detached from their present association with socioeconomic position (by those egalitarian reforms that Herrnstein so disingenuously fears), aspects of the interaction between individuals and their environments that are now dominated by gross and powerful class or caste differences would come to the fore in their own right. After all, every one of the forms of parent or child behavior that predict a comparatively bleak social future can be found in families of all social classes even now.[4] Those manifestations of *social* behavior have nothing whatever to do with genes, and therefore there is little or no danger that any group of people engaging in such behaviors (even making the extremely questionable assumption of assortative mating among them) could ever form a distinctive, self-reproducing gene pool.

Herrnstein does not seem to understand the meaning of the term "class." What identifies a social class is that its members and their children obtain a range of benefits by virtue of membership in it that are denied, formally or informally, to members of a "lower" class. Class is thus one of the two major kinds of social grouping (the other being caste) that does indeed distribute benefits or penalties in every area of a person's life. But class can only have that effect, and indeed can only exist as a useful analytic conception, where benefits and penalties are distributed with a marked inequality. Even occupation, which for Herrnstein and Jensen is the most important distributor of social rewards and penalties, does not function in that way unless occupational position is also associated with strongly unequal class membership. (In hunter/gatherer societies, e.g., there were different occupational but no social classes, and therefore one's occupation—being either a hunter or a gatherer—did not affect one's social position adversely.)

Since the whole purpose of egalitarian reform is precisely to end the irrational and unnecessary association between occupation and the availability of a society's range of goods and services, by making the latter available to all with a minimal inequality regardless of occupation or income, egalitarians need feel no alarm at all about the prospect that people of different inherent capacities might wind up handling different jobs. So what? In an egalitarian society, it would not matter that, owing to their differential intelligences, some persons were mechanics and others sales managers. There would be nothing *crucial* that the sales managers could buy with whatever extra money income (if any) was necessary to induce them to perform their (perhaps) "more important" tasks. And thus neither group would be passing on its own life chances, willy-nilly, to its children.[5]

What Herrnstein seems to have done, in his sociological ignorance, is to have adopted intuitively (but without understanding its implications) Marx's notion that the division of labor, by its very existence, penalizes those who hold certain jobs for life. He seems to agree with Marx that certain types of work are inherently degrading of body and soul as compared to others. But one hardly makes the effects of the division of labor worse by eliminating the extraneous conditions of class existence that are now attached to it! On the contrary, we have to wonder whether many of the pains inherent in "the degradation of labor" do not result from the all-too-obvious

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association of certain jobs with an inferior and unhappy social existence. This is certainly how those Americans who were interviewed by Sennett and Cobb or Robert Coles see it: to the extent that they see their lives as a humiliation, they associate that condition with their powerlessness. If both power and income were redistributed in offices and workplaces, if executive work commanded neither differential pay nor differential access to control over one's environment, there would be no reason to believe that what now are prestigious but psychologically difficult white-collar jobs would be more attractive than blue-collar jobs in the eyes of most people.

Moreover, despite Marx's utopian preference for the society in which I can "hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd, or critic," it is obvious from the bulk of his work that even Marx did not expect the total elimination of occupation in what he called "communist society." What he expected, rather, was the diminution of *the tyranny of the working day* (the notion that is at the heart of *Das Kapital*), so that no person's living time need be totally dominated, nor character brutalized, by lengthy, exclusive immersion in one stultifying job. There is nothing inherently wretched about working in a factory (Marx could hardly have thought that and praised the bourgeoisie for its introduction of a high level of industrialization, not to mention a work environment in which workers must perforce learn to cooperate with each other). It is only comparatively wretched when one is deprived of the ability to exercise all one's faculties by an extreme specialization of labor; and when one is deprived of those levels of income and self-determination that the opinion-makers in one's society deem worthy of respect. If we could democratize the workplace and redistribute income and prestige—if we can do what egalitarians propose to do—then genetically determined IQ differences, if they exist at all, will be of no further moment.

III

The Herrnstein-Jensen argument, though it purports to be based on the science of genetics, is in the end not a biological argument after all. Rather, they use their assertions about the heritability of IQ to give a unique twist to the economist's structural theory that differential monetary rewards are necessary to a smoothly functioning economy. This theory tells us that some people will "rationally" or efficiently be paid more than others because they add more value to the worth of given products. Leaving aside for now the practical applicability of that theory (not to mention the startling discrepancy between "marginal" differences, as the economists call them, and those that exist in the American income and wealth structure), we can consider Herrnstein's elaboration.

In a rational society, he tells us, those who can be expected to add more or less worth to materials by their labor can be and perhaps should be differentiated according to their intellectual capabilities. At least some part of every individual's intellectual capability, he adds, must be genetically composed, or inherent. (Here he diverges from the marginalist economists, who make no assertions about human nature or "natural" inequality.) IQ scores, which are decidedly unequal, are furthermore the best guide we have to the extent of each person's inherent capability. This being the case, it does not matter whether egalitarians try to eliminate or attenuate the impact of class stratification, because they cannot do so. There will always be a large class of the intellectually inferior, who must therefore receive inferior rewards from any rational society; and we have learned this not from any impressionistic observations about human behavior, but "scientifically"—from IQ tests themselves.

Thus Herrnstein replaces a self-contradictory argument with one that seems at least to make logical sense. However, in this version of the argument he has allegedly deduced his vision of extensive and "natural" human inequality from IQ test scores. The

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question this immediately suggests is, What is there about IQ testing that makes us think its results accurately represent a "natural" or "inherent" capacity?

The answer, according to Herrnstein and Jensen, is that IQ unequally distributes important conceptual abilities; that the inequality with which it distributes them takes the form of what statisticians call a "normal distribution"; and that the normal distribution is really a *natural* distribution. Thus, they reason, the wide dispersal of IQ scores is not a mere statistical artifact but the reflection of an underlying genetic reality; and so too, by extension, is the similarly wide dispersal of rewards that people in societies such as ours obtain for doing different kinds of work. Once again, however, we shall see that every step in this chain of reasoning is false.

The normal or bell-shaped curve represents a distribution of observations in which a few measurements are located at either extreme but most bunch toward the average value of whatever is being measured, there being also an equal number of cases on either side of the average or mean value; moreover, the mean, median, and modal value are identical. In the context of IQ tests, of which the mean value (of the most well known ones) is 100 with a standard deviation of 15 points (see below), a normal distribution entails that approximately 68 percent of observed cases fall equally within plus or minus one-standard deviation (SD) from 100 (i.e., 34 percent from 85 to 100, and 34 percent from 100 to 115); an additional 27 percent between 15 and 30 points above or below the mean, that is ± 2 SD, and most of the remaining 5 percent ± 3 SD from the mean (between 55 and 70, or 130 and 145).

This happens to be the form taken by the distribution of many accidental or random phenomena, both "natural" and man-made. (By accidental man-made phenomena, I mean frequently occurring events that no one is consciously trying to bring about in a particular pattern.) Generally speaking, the shape of the bell curve reflects the unsurprising fact that often the most frequently appearing size (the mode) of a natural phenomenon (say, height) that recurs over time will also tend to be the average size (mean) as well as the middle size (median).

It is obviously an easy leap from the observation that so many frequency distributions take a shape generated by the binomial theorem to the conclusion that the theorem expresses some underlying principle of reality, instead of being a mere artifact of statistical reasoning, of the way we choose to discriminate among our observations for extraneous purposes of computation. It is an equally easy leap to the further conclusion that *any* measurement system (such as IQ tests) *ought* therefore to generate measurements whose frequency curve is "normal."[6] Many psychologists have made that leap, and it is this kind of reasoning that Herrnstein and Jensen follow when they deduce that the decidedly inegalitarian outcomes of IQ testing accurately reflect a "natural," random distribution of intelligence. Here their errors begin.

First, Herrnstein and Jensen are making the totally unwarranted assumption that the human intelligence that is transmitted genetically is the same, *with the same general dimensions*, as the one that is reflected in IQ test scores. But we have every reason to disbelieve this.

What all IQ-type tests have in common (as I have noted in the first of these three articles) is that one must be tuned in to the idea of abstract testing behavior in order to do well at them: and that state of mind is a social artifact, not an inbred trait. Human life, to be sure, imposes certain constant requirements (though the circumstances under which they must be met are hardly constant) pertaining to decision-making ability, the awareness of danger, or ability to manipulate the behavior of others. But those abilities are not measured on intelligence tests. On the contrary, intelligence tests measure only *expressed* conceptual reasoning powers. Those powers are surely required for many of the important tasks of a complex society, and it is certainly healthier to be able to express them rather than have them bottled up inside. But

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environmental pressures and different subcultural and individual experiences both inhibit and channel their expression in various ways. All in all, then, IQ tells us nothing about innate abilities, for there is no way to measure those abilities against a base line that can be defined independently of particular, prejudicially influential social standards (and it would certainly be an outré form of neo-Social Darwinism that would assert, e.g., that "natural selection" aids those who are fitted to survive in 20th-century capitalist society).

In this basic respect IQ is quite unlike, say, height, which for a given individual remains objectively the same measured against some independent object as a tree or a wall, no matter who is doing the measuring or for what social purposes, and no matter the state of mind or subcultural traits of the person being measured. (In a typical sleight-of-hand trick, Jensen at one point implicitly associates IQ with height by noting that "the characteristics we are most interested in, however, are continuous variables, like height and IQ. Their wide variability over a continuous range of values is said to be polygenic. . . ." Said indeed! Income, pitchers' earned-run averages, and numbers of miles between places of work and places of residence are also "continuous variables"—but that does not mean they are "polygenic.")

THUS FAR we have said no more than that IQ inequality tells us nothing about the full range of potential human capabilities. Many psychologists, however, will continue to insist that "intelligence," no matter how measured, is probably distributed "normally," because so many other things are. This suggests the need for a further clarification. Even were we to grant for purposes of argument that the normal curves we draw are generated not by requirements we set for engaging in statistical reasoning, but to reflect the real world of things somehow, we still would have no reason to confuse the allegedly normal distribution of underlying native intelligence with the particular normal distribution of IQ scores. For although Jensen and Herrnstein (and many others) write as though *all* normal distributions are effectively the same—that is, demonstrate the same extent of variation among the measured subjects—this is not the case.

All "normal" distributions are indeed alike with respect to the way in which they distribute measurements proportionally, but they can take very different shapes depending on the average size of the differences *between* the various measurements. Thus the really significant element in a normal distribution is the size of the *standard deviation* (see p. 402) of the population sample.

We have noted that virtually all the cases for a normal distribution fall within ± 3 SD from the median/mean: we can divide the area enclosed by a normal curve on a graph into six equal parts (equal in horizontal distance covered, that is), which will contain most of the cases in the proportion stated above. But the *size* of the deviation units is given by the standard deviation, that is, the distance from one deviation point (separating those six blocks of space) to the next. If the size of those deviation units and thus of the standard deviation is very small as compared with the mean size of whatever is being measured, we are given a totally different impression of the phenomenon than we would obtain if the deviation units were comparatively large: we obtain a relatively "egalitarian" bell-shaped curve in which the existing, proportional inequalities don't amount to very much.

To return to the case of human height, if we were told that the height of adult males in a certain society showed a midpoint of 5′9″ (about what it is in the U.S. today), and an SD of six inches, then we would know that about 95 percent of those males were between 4′9″ and 6′9″. We would think to ourselves that male height in that human group was extremely unequal, and it would never occur to us to adopt policies for equalizing it, such as the mass production of elevator shoes, crash programs of research into the nutritional deficiencies of short people, etc. Contrarily, if the SD were two inches, it would seem a fairly egalitarian society to us by

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comparison with the other one—though the proportional distribution of heights would be *exactly* the same—and if it were found that short men were less attractive to women than tall men, innovation with elevator shoes might become a serious issue.

IQ tests purport to measure a phenomenon that is obviously much more subject to reform and equalization through conscious policy-making than is height. But for IQ tests, 100 has been set as the midpoint (mean, mode, and median) and the SD is 15 points. Thus two people with IQs one SD above and below the mean differ in their IQs by almost one-third of the social mean (30/100). This is a considerably greater degree of absolute inequality than even that given in my first height example (12/69). It is as though 32 percent of all American men were either shorter than 4′0″ or taller than 7′5″! Again, a person with an IQ of 80 is separated from one with an IQ of 130 (two SDs above and below the mean) by 50 points, or *half* the mean. This is a most substantial difference. To say that you have an IQ of 50 points less than another, when for more than 99 percent of the population the entire range itself only contains 90 IQ points, is clearly to suggest that there is a great variation in "innate" intelligence (the + 3 SD score of 145 is more than 2½ times as large as the -3 SD score of 55). It is also clearly suggested that someone at or near the lower end of the scale must be decisively incompetent by comparison with someone at or near the upper end. Moreover, the extensiveness of the range enables us to make very fine comparisons among these apparently "innate" values, comparisons that seem to carry their own aura of reality with them. No one, after all, would think to make statements about the intelligence of A vs. that of B if their IQ scores were respectively 120 and 118. But if one score is 120 and the other 110 (or 2/3 of an SD) comparisons begin to suggest themselves; it even begins to seem feasible to make requirements out of them, formally or informally, so that we begin to want our managers to have IQs of 120, and foremen of "only" 110.[7]

All of these comparisons and assessments are functions entirely of the size of the standard deviation. Suppose, e.g., the IQ SD were set at 3 points. Then the difference of 2/3 of an SD between A and B would be a mere 2 IQ points rather than 10, and only psychometric pedants would dream of making competence comparisons between them. Even the distance from -3 SD to +3 SD would be only the distance from an "IQ" of 91 to an "IQ" of 109. In that case, in fact, we would not bother to have IQ testing at all.

This counterexample, certainly, would be meaningless or dishonestly evasive if the standard deviation of 15 points on IQ test scores were a natural or random phenomenon; that is, if we had set out to "measure" intelligence according to some objective baseline standard and discovered, to our surprise, that our sample showed a mean score of 100 and an SD of 15 points. But this is not what happens methodologically and not what happened historically. Those particular values exist as they do only because the early psychometrists wanted to create a body of "data" that would justify ranking people *very much* above or below each other.

Why they wanted to do that is itself an interesting question. Among the reasons were the desire to separate sheep—the "mentally defective"—from goats—"normals"—very visibly. In addition, among the American founders of "objective testing" there was a lot of plain old-fashioned racism, and they often expressed the thought that the tests could be used for eugenic purposes, to identify the lesser breeds such as Slavs, Jews, Orientals, Negroes, etc., who could then either be prohibited from immigrating into the U.S. or prevented from further breeding if they were already here.[8] In short, the IQ curve is an invention of inegalitarians who wished to represent quantitatively their own extremely hierarchical view of what they called "human nature"—it has nothing to do with "science."

Thus, IQ tests consist of questions selected precisely in order to produce a mean of 100 and an SD of 15. When either of those values shows signs of a drift away from the norm, the

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tests are rewritten to make them "harder." The questions, in other words, exist to produce scores that the test-makers thought would be an appropriate collection of scores, and there were and are no other, "objective" grounds at all on which the appropriateness of the questions could be demonstrated. In the sense, therefore, in which statisticians say a measurement is "valid"—truly measuring what is supposed to be measured—IQ tests and measures (such as the 15 point SD) associated with them cannot possibly be said ever to have been validated.

What all this means (aside from telling us something about the social power of the test-makers) is that there is nothing inherently "natural" or "real"about the great spread of intellectual capacities, which according to our social mythology IQ tests uncover—but which in reality they actually create. Did they wish it, the testers could equally well design tests showing that most people are very close to average "intelligence," or alternatively that there are millions upon millions of submorons or geniuses: "Any distribution of I.Q. test scores can be skewed to the right by making the test questions more difficult, or to the left by making them easier," and thus the results "tell us nothing about the actual shape of mental-ability distribution."[9] (In fact, the very first tests showed men to be more "intelligent" than women, and eventually psychometrists restandardized the tests so that they would *not* show that difference systematically.)

The content of IQ tests is therefore quite arbitrary as to the qualities that are being measured, and how they are being measured. There is no need for egalitarians to deny that whatever it is IQ tests measure may be as unequally distributed as the test results show, because there is no reason to believe that what IQ tests do measure is in any extent a reasonable index of our innate intellectual capacities, whether those are in whole or in part genetic or environmental in their origins.

Nor is it necessary to take a Luddite view that all intelligence testing must be done away with, although clearly in an inegalitarian society such testing is likely to be used to accentuate the inequalities. This must certainly be true of IQ tests that, in the language of testing theory, are *norm-referenced.* That is, they do not test practical mastery of a particular body of knowledge or ability—say, the mastery needed to enable an individual to handle some specific range of socially productive jobs, to deal adequately with the labyrinthine ways of service bureaucracies, etc. Rather the norm-referenced tests simply rank people relative to each other around an abstract "performance" norm that has no corollary in concrete, socially relevant task performance. The sole purpose of testing for this abstract norm is to place everyone on a wide, finely graded ordinal scale and so to produce a nationwide comparative ranking; no other practical purpose is served. (If different tests could be developed for particular parochial subcultures, testing *could* be used to identify "underachievers": i.e., those members of a subculture whose schoolwork is being done at a level below that at which the tests indicate it should be done.)[10]The tests therefore are *designed* to uncover sharp inequalities, and of course they do so.

In sum, this version of the claim that there must always be significant class differences, for reasons of efficiency, is based solely on the deduction that statistically below-average performance on IQ tests demonstrates a real incapacity to do useful work—which is about as gross as the measured difference in IQ points suggests it is. This deduction is based entirely on prejudice; nothing about the nature of IQ—not even its "normal" distribution—casts doubt on the view that the results of IQ testing are best explained by an examination of the social framework in which the testing is embedded.

Clearly, no one need doubt that in some degree or other, as yet unknown, underlying individual differences in intellectual capacity, of a magnitude we cannot possibly estimate, are linked to some of our genes, in a manner and to an extent of which we have no knowledge at all. But IQ scores alone give us no reason to believe that the manifest *differences* among people are of such a nature

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as to be considered significant *inequalities*. Above all, the tests, once we understand their true nature, give us no reason to believe that on the downward side there is inherently a serious general deficiency in human intelligence—despite those appearances to the contrary that too many testers have deliberately helped to foster.

IV

In reply to the contentions that what we know about IQ scores and their causes has no relevance to what we really want to know about human intelligence—that human social inequality can easily be explained without reference to genetics, and that the worst of this inequality at least is remediable—Herrnstein and Jensen demonstrate that they have one other string to their bow. Again, however, the demonstration is chiefly of methodological ineptitude and sheer prejudice.

In addition to their inadequate defenses of IQ measurements and heritability studies, and as though recognizing that IQ tests have in truth never been validated, Jensen and Herrnstein both give what the latter calls "a pragmatic answer" to their critics. This "pragmatic answer,"upon which their whole argument about the necessity of inequality ultimately stands or falls, goes as follows: Whatever IQ scores do or do not "really" measure, and whatever "heritability" really is or is not, the "fact"is that IQ scores correlate closely with other aspects of social behavior that are presumably of great practical importance to us. Indices of educational attainment, "success" in life as indicated by income, and place in the occupational hierarchy supposedly offer such correlations to a greater or lesser extent.

The correlation between IQ level and occupational attainment is the one they fasten upon most tenaciously. Herrnstein and Jensen (the former at greater length) both make much of the "prestige ratings" of various occupations in a few public opinion studies, and of an alleged correlation between IQ and occupational prestige; Jensen even mentions the ranking of occupations by their "intellectual demands," as rated by one psychologist writing in the 1920s. Their claim is that IQ is *in any event* a valid predictor of our socia. achievements. Conversely—and this link in the chain of reasoning is decisive once we have begun to doubt the relevance of their largely spurious heritability data—if our achievements are unequal in the same way as are our IQs, then that coincidence may be taken as a vindication of the "reality" of whatever IQ measures, and the validity of the way in which IQ measures it. That "reality"—the reality of the normal distribution of intelligence and its associated widely dispersed units of deviation—is attested to by the *usefulness* of IQ tests, if by nothing else about them. IQ distributes occupation (allegedly), and the occupational distribution manifestly works to society's advantage. Thus it might be said on behalf of Jensen and Herrnstein that, since critics like myself (with our quibbles about the validity of the heritability data) cannot prove IQ is *not* heritable, we should submit our criticisms to the judgment of the ultimate intellectual tribunal: IQ tests being socially valuable, we should agree that the social report they give us must be "true."

Quite apart from the butchery of Dewey's pragmatism inherent in the vulgar notion that what is useful to act on is what we ought to call "true," the force of this argument depends entirely on our subjective agreement that the occupational hierarchy in, say, American society is first, "rational," and second, not replaceable by any different arrangement. We have to accept that the people who get paid the most money do the most important work and are also the "most intelligent" people; and that the people presently doing "less important" work could not do the more important work equally well. No doubt, IQ acquires at least a surface plausibility if scores correlate with productive achievement in a highly productive society. Obviously, the question is, do they?

According to Herrnstein, "the ties among I.Q., occupation, and social standing make practical sense;" and society is thus wisely "husbanding its intellectual resources" when it informally enforces those ties by molding

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the more important occupations "in greater esteem and paying them more." What are some of these intellectual discriminations that, Herrnstein asserts, "husband" society's "intellectual resources" and thus validate IQ testing as an index of human ability?

In the passage just quoted, Herrnstein is contrasting the intelligence we demand of engineers and ditchdiggers, which seems superficially reasonable enough—though it isn't at all clear why anyone has to make "ditchdigger" a *career.* But, at the same time, he approvingly presents us with a tantalizing sample of a table from a World War II study of the occupations and IQs of enlisted men. In its original form this table—the only "hard evidence" Herrnstein ever offers on this issue—shows at least 10 points of average IQ difference between the following pairs of occupations (higher IQ listed first): public relations man and foreman (or machinist or musician or airplane mechanic); bartender and truck driver (8 points); accountant and production manager; salesman and auto mechanic; sales manager and cabinet maker, or electrician or lathe operator.[11]

Furthermore, the comparisons Herrnstein does give are only for *men,* who turn out to do all the husbanding of society's intellectual resources on their own. When challenged with the obvious argument that many women of high IQ are not being rewarded at all, or not equivalently, for the work *they* do, Herrnstein can add nothing to his earlier comment, in summarizing a study of high-IQ persons, that:

> Women's salaries were substantially lower than the men's and did not correlate with contentment. Notwithstanding their poorer salaries, on the average, the women reported greater satisfaction in their lives than the men. The housewives, who were earning less money than anyone else, expressed about as much satisfaction as any other group in the sample. There is little here to support the feminist argument that a housewife's life is intolerable, especially for educated, intelligent women. It would be hard to pick a brighter group than the women in this study, yet they seemed to be adjusting easily to their lot [sic]. To give but one example of the many striking cases, a woman whose I.Q. of 192 places her close to the top of the entire sample, and whose retested intelligence at maturity was again virtually at the top, was raising eight children, including three sets of twins. According to the account at the latest report, she had no outside activity at that time other than an interest in the P.T.A., but was apparently content, if not serene. Of course, such tranquillity may be gone now, fifteen years later.

Herrnstein thus offers us two fascinating conclusions. First, in every case mentioned either directly or by implication, he rates more highly the job that pays more and is also (for men) either relatively nonproductive or involves only paperwork that is often irrelevant to any effort at extending the real wealth and thus the economic well-being of society (not to mention its artistic wealth and cultural well-being). Second, "men's work" is ranked by him primarily according to the income it generates and by the alleged correlation between occupational income and IQ held to be socially constructive. Adjustment to their "lot," which is fundamental in justifying the women's role, is only incidental to his argument about men; it is ignored when he speaks of bartenders, PR men, etc., and merely tacked on to his report of a high-IQ study, of which the most important finding is that IQ, as opposed to education, "definitely affects income. . . ."

Herrnstein has thus carefully arranged matters so as to ignore the large body of both opinion and data that would discredit his "pragmatic" conclusion. Having done so, he can indeed safely conclude that persons with higher IQ "naturally," if they are men, earn and deserve the higher pay they receive: one has only to see how important their jobs are to know it.

But of course these correlations in no way teach us that society either is or needs to be intellectually graded. We learn only that in the U.S. there seems to be a certain degree of fit between men's IQs and men's incomes and occupations—and Hernstein's social values. Anyone who has ever flown in a plane with one engine out, or driven in a car with failing brakes, or worried about the dangers of faulty

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wiring, will be able to make his or her own judgment of whether society is (or was) "wisely husbanding" its intellectual resources. Similarly, we are all capable of making our own judgments as to whether high-IQ women who are past the age of childbearing and childrearing (leaving aside entirely the question of whether that latter task might not be apportioned more equally among the sexes) are contributing the most they can to society when relegated to the boards of powerless voluntary associations. No doubt, any such judgment will be neither better nor worse than Herrnstein's, since all rankings of occupational merit are completely arbitrary.

The point, then, is not to repeat Herrnstein's error but rather to recognize the arbitrariness of his, and Jensen's, argument. So far as anyone knows there is no consistent relationship of any kind between income and productivity; or income and social utility; or income and moral goodness. Income is simply a function of marketplace and political power, both of which are generated by a long train of historical circumstance that has not necessarily had anything to do with "merit" or "usefulness."

To the extent that IQ may correlate with income or occupational standing, therefore, psychologists in their testing activities will only have succeeded in faithfully reflecting the values of their time, as embodied in the occupational class structure. To that extent also, and by suggesting the putative existence of millions of natively "incompetent" persons, they have put the tests to the use for which they were intended by some of their American originators. But we are still left with not the faintest grounds, "pragmatic" or otherwise, for believing, or acting as though we believe, that IQ scores measure, or the shape of the IQ curve distributes, a trait that is functionally related to the accomplishment of socially important tasks. What is naturally useful is hardly the same as what is found useful by a majority of the inhabitants of a stratified society, subjected to the manifold influences of custom, propaganda, and coercion, and all the other realistically inescapable obstacles to creating any alternative way of life.

Jensen, in a typical passage, says "we see that the prestige hierarchy of occupations is a reliable objective reality in our society"—having just quoted a paragraph from the most famous social mobility study that includes the phrase, "Our argument tends to imply that a correlation between IQ and occupational achievement was more or less built into IQ tests, by virtue of the psychologists' implicit acceptance of the social standards of the general populace."[12] Jensen's passage is typically the exact opposite of a truthful report of the data. The relationship between income/occupation and IQ reflects a *subjective* social reality, and the earnings accruing to IQ are no more a validation of its social utility than the sales of a book are a validation of its literary or scholarly merit. We have no grounds for believing that if, after a period of mutual retraining, prestigious and well-paid high-IQ public relations men, stock analysts, or real estate brokers switched jobs with prestigeless, lower-IQ truck drivers (or with any random sample of housewives), the real productivity of society would in the long run be any the less.

V

Jensen and Herrnstein thus fail to establish either that IQ is pragmatically "real" or that the social hierarchy it correlates with is "rational." It therefore is hardly surprising that the partial correlations on which they rest so much of their case are spurious. (Given Herrnstein's values, we should all be grateful for that.) They have made the common error of neglecting to ask whether other factors ("intervening variables") that influence both IQ *and* occupational rank (or income) might not account for the alleged correspondence between them.

Christopher Jencks and his associates, applying a complex analytical model called "path analysis" to existing data about social mobility, have found that factors other than IQ *do* appear to be the real predictors (in a causal sense) of occupational rank. One such causal factor is the occupational status of one's father: in short, birth rather than

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"merit." The other strongest causal factor is one's educational attainments, measured merely as years of formal schooling undergone.[13]

Moreover, lest we think that educational attainment predicts income because the educated also have high IQs, Jencks notes that the strength of the correlation rather lies in the tendency of employers (and personnel directors looking for a cheap way to distinguish among otherwise indistinguishable job candidates) to require formal educational credentials of very doubtful applicability to on-the-job performance. Although meeting those credentials requirements is hard for people with low test scores, inasmuch as most schools deliberately track such persons away from a college-oriented curriculum, IQ itself appears to mean little once one actually has a job:

> The modest relationship between test scores and wages in most occupations seems to reflect the fact that test scores have only a modest effect on actual competence in most lines of work. . . .
>
> Even in . . . highly technical fields, the difference between good and bad work seems to be more a matter of habits, values, attitudes, and outlook than of knowing the right answers to written or oral questions.
>
> All the evidence we have reviewed points in the same direction. Most jobs require a wide variety of skills. Standardized tests measure only a very limited number of these skills. If an individual with low scores has the necessary noncognitive skills, and if he can get into an occupation, his performance on the job will not usually be appreciably below the norm for the occupation.

Jencks therefore concludes, contrary to Herrnstein, that

> . . . Such findings do not support the theory that if schools and colleges placed less emphasis on academic standards and cognitive skills, employers would fall back on tests to measure these skills. They suggest that if schools and colleges placed less emphasis on cognitive skills, the correlations between tests scores and status might just fall. (Jencks, *et al.*, pp. 186-87.)[14]

What Jencks does not say, though it follows directly from his analysis, is that schooling and IQ scores correlate as well as they do because they are such similar experiences, at least as practiced in the United States. Both schooling and IQ scores stress the ability and willingness to do well on written tests of academic subject matter, and neither bears any visible, immediate relation to the acquisition of job-oriented skills of any kind—and the likelihood of success is for both strongly dependent on the various background circumstances of one's life to which Jencks (and Bowles and Gintis) pointed.

The relative strength of the influence of those circumstances, and the influence of IQ, is startling. Assuming even some fairly high (and thus unjustifiable) figure for the heritability of IQ, then, writes Jencks, "if all the nongenetic causes of inequality were eliminated, the income gap between the top and bottom fifths of all male workers would fall from around 7 to 1 to around 1.4 to 1." Moreover, even that relationship may now be slightly overstated, in that more recent studies show a sharp drop in the job-market dollar value of a college education—and thus, to some marginal extent, of IQ. But in any event, in the absence of great inherited wealth and power, such an income ratio would satisfy almost any egalitarian as at least a first approximation of economic equality, and thus Herrnstein's claim for the rationality and inevitability of our existing occupational hierarchy is revealed as meaningless. Even were we somehow to be shown that we really need an occupational hierarchy based on "intelligence," that hierarchy would apparently not have to be nearly so sharply graded as to create the serious, classwise differences of income we now live with. On the basis of the only evidence we have, we cannot possibly credit the notion that occupational "success" in this or any society is in any significant way necessarily predicated on one's genetic constitution.

When confronted with the criticism that society's occupational hierarchy is not to any great extent rationally arranged according to IQ—that we do not live in a "meritocracy," unless to a very, very limited extent—Herrn-

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stein replies by arguing that whether society is *now* meritocratic, it is bound to become more so with the spread of computer technology and similar innovations. *Eventually,* therefore, in the interest of social efficiency we will have to use IQ as a guide to occupational placement, because a very large proportion of the population will prove not to possess the intellectual abilities requisite for "good" or important jobs in the kind of highly technological society that the advanced industrial nations are all tending to become.

The problem with this final version of Herrnstein's argument is again that little evidence exists in support of it; worse, there is much evidence that casts a great deal of doubt on his central proposition.

As to the effect of technological progress, it can only be said that, when challenged, Herrnstein simply reiterates his original, unsupported statement. His single reference to evidence lies in a reference to "a paper by R. W. Weiss, E. Harwood, and D. Riesman," which, he claims, contains "ample data confirming the (to me) self-evident supposition that automation tends to shift available work toward higher intellectual requirements."[15] Self-evidence is the kind that Herrnstein and Jensen most respect. However, the paper by Weiss *et al.* says no such thing. Rather, its authors report:

> Not long ago many people believed that advanced technology would raise the educational and skill requirements of workers in all sectors of the economy. However, today most labor force experts believe that the high unemployment experienced by factory workers during the late 1950s was due not to the advent of automatic machinery but to inadequate aggregate demand for manufactured goods. It is possible that individual manufacturing corporations did introduce technological improvements that changed their requirements for semiskilled production workers, but in the aggregate automation did not appear to have a uniform effect on either raising or lowering skill requirements. When aggregate demand for manufactured goods picked up in the 1960s, blue-collar workers were once again in great demand. . . .[16]

Weiss *et al.* also note that case studies of individual firms often show that the increased volume of sales caused by technological innovation increases the semiskilled work force in related areas such as transportation and clerical work. And where technological advance has decreased employment opportunities for the semiskilled, as in the petroleum refining industry, it has increased opportunities for "skilled maintenance men"—not, one would think, a job category beyond the capabilities of most persons who have developed good learning habits in school. In fact, then, the paper to which Herrnstein refers, if it "confirms" anything, confirms the more self-evident proposition that technological advance, by creating such instruments as adding machines, pocket calculators, key punch machines, continuous-flow production systems, etc., makes it easier for the person of average intelligence to do jobs that used to be reserved for those with special mathematical ability—as reading off from dials the states of a production process that in the past could only be supervised by someone conversant with all the complicated techniques utilized in the process. This is why "technological progress" is progressive: it enhances the productive powers of averagely competent persons.

In general and historically, the routinization of work is the consequence of new, productive techniques that are invented by persons of great originality (if not of genius) who do not necessarily have much social support. The new methods are then put into practice and supervised by highly skilled persons, and finally come to be so simplified and organized that they can be managed by any averagely intelligent person. Thus it is, for example, that we would rather be operated on by a substandard surgeon of 1976 than by the greatest surgeon of the 18th century, because of the much more sophisticated equipment and knowledge available to the former. Similarly, today's average backyard tinkerer can do things with an auto engine that would have been beyond the capabilities of the "genius" Watt.[17] Indeed, the major criticism

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of modern technology by both radicals and conservatives has always been that it infantilizes workers, deprives them of the instinct of workmanship, dulls their minds and limits their horizons. The criticism may be exaggerated (or the past it holds up as a model may be romanticized); but, even so, the generalization that technological progress routinizes work requirements is surely on safer ground than its contrary. If there is an obvious exception, it would pertain to the nature of decision-making in large organizations, for here we may require greater complexity rather than simplification or routinization.[18] But nothing in IQ tests relates to the ability to be an "intelligent" decision-maker; nothing in the IQ literature tells us anything about how much decision-making ability there is in a society, or where it is located. And though that ability may in some sense be "inborn," we have no reason to believe that it is inherited.

VI

Admittedly, it would again be compounding Herrnstein's error to claim that the very limited evidence we have about the effects of intellectual advance is anything more than ambiguous. But nowhere except in utopian fantasies can we find a prognostication that highly demanding intellectual work is going to become the average work of even "post-industrial society." From the few efforts that have been made at understanding the shape of our technological future, a much less dramatic picture emerges.

- First, technological progress indeed brings about a relative increase in the size of the "knowledge industry"; that is its most apparent product now.[19] This increase is brought about in part by the replacement of industrial human and machine labor with sophisticated automatized control systems. These do require some upgrading (though hardly an inordinate amount) in the levels of intellectual skill associated with productive labor. On the other hand, some as yet unknown but clearly significant portion of the new automated systems jobs do not themselves require a striking degree of cognitive or conceptual ability but, at the most, the "wide variety of skills" Jencks refers to.
- Second, a good part of the increase in size of the "knowledge industry" is traceable to the capacity of a more productive economy to support a growing number of workers in service rather than manufacturing industries.[20] But again, many of these new service jobs are not intellectually demanding in the sense that IQ supposedly measures intellect (though some of the new service jobs may be extraordinarily demanding of human sympathy, flexibility, etc.). The conventional distinction between "white-collar" and "blue-collar" work obscures the reality that many jobs of the former type are no more oriented toward independent intellectual understanding than traditional factory work: perhaps even less, if factory workers were encouraged to take an interest in the organization of their own productive process. (Andrew Levison has recently pointed out that file clerks and messenger boys are routinely listed as "white-collar" or "service" workers.)[21]
- Third, if aggregate economic demand is maintained, technological progress also creates an extensive number of useful if only semiskilled jobs.
- Fourth, the expanding demand for intellectually trained personnel, to the extent that demand does expand, has until now been matched, at least in the U.S., by an ever-expanding proportion of social resources devoted to educating people to meet that demand. (That proportion could be greatly expanded if political leaders or their constituents did not willfully choose to spend the social surplus on other goods or services, ranging from sophisticated weapons to primitive cosmetics.) Many of the new "intellectual" jobs, furthermore, require mainly no more than the ability to submit with good discipline to on-the-job training. If there is any shortage of intellectually skilled workers in any field, it is because we do not train enough interested persons in the

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appropriate techniques (medical care in the U.S. is a prominent example). No labor market economist has ever suggested that available human resources are inadequate.

• In no way, then, does technological progress outpace the improvement of the human material genetically available in modern societies. On the contrary, we can as easily posit a set of circumstances under which Herrnstein's prophecy would be disproved:

(1) the long-term elimination of arbitrary social barriers, special constraints on labor mobility, and extreme negative social conditions;

(2) the development of a social determination to devote a greater portion of resources to education and training for all levels of skilled work—including compensatory education, where necessary;

(3) the development of techniques for correcting the great variety of what are now considered (nongenetic) "learning disabilities"—many of which are associated with poor nutrition, substandard living conditions, etc., not to mention patterns of family life that though difficult to change are hardly genetic in origin;

(4) the long-run maintenance of a high level of aggregate economic demand coupled with a commitment to technological progress of a kind that draws on human capacities rather than stifling them.

Given that conjunction of conditions, the proportion of the population capable of putting its talents to work at useful careers in any imaginable future society ought to rise sharply; only those with serious *organic* defects (and perhaps there could be many fewer of those given improved obstetrical care) would have to fall into the category of being unable to do worthwhile work. More, if we wished to move in the direction Marx indicated through his attacks on the division of labor and its consequences, we could easily involve many more people in "mental" as opposed to "physical" labor for at least some period of their work lives in general, or some part of each of their working days in particular.

Of course it will surely be very difficult to make all or even any of those things happen. But if American or any similar society fails to devote itself to training people for new jobs, and creating new jobs (or redefining old ones) so that they are fit for people, it will not be because of any impediment in "human nature" but because of a lack of will or other relevant resources.

The distribution of IQ scores, and their alleged and partial correlation with occupational rank, is no guide at all to the amount of underlying intellectual talent that is potentially available to us. The millions of people who have been labeled "below average" by the IQ testers are "below average" only because every "normal" frequency distribution requires that a large number of observations be below (and above) average, not because they are humanly inferior, or incompetent to do socially useful work. Given what we know about the various conditions, ranging from the subtle to the manifestly hideous, which block the expression of human potential, and given also what we know about the ability of human beings to express an underlying trait in so many culturally diverse ways (with the appropriate training), we should probably reach a conclusion quite contrary to Herrnstein's. In respect to those inherited capabilities necessary for performing socially useful work, normal people probably vary much less from each other than IQ tests are permitted to suggest, if only all were given a chance to develop their talents to the fullest. Thus the existence of genetic diversity among people should pose no serious obstacle to the attainment of any state of social equality we may desire to reach.

The only pragmatic truth offered by the analysis of IQ scores is thus the pragmatic truth that many people, including some academics, are well served by the *status quo* and will use any means, including that of making intellectually shoddy arguments, to help maintain it. But if IQ tests are to be put to the task of maintaining the *status quo,* there is no point in pretending that their "heritability" has anything to do with their utility for that

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purpose. IQ tests can be put to such use only because the realities of power and social class division stand behind them; the assertion that they actually do measure some real aspect of human nature is no more than a meretricious attempt to sugar-coat that power and that class division. We choose for various reasons to reward the working and nonworking members of our society with greatly disparate incomes. That choice having been made, the population then sorts itself out into the existing income-generating positions according to various of its characteristics. Among these, IQ and whatever underlying native capacity it may reflect has only a negligible independent effect.

I concluded the second of these articles by suggesting that the existence of genetically different races within a society is not by itself a necessary obstacle to equality. That comment can now be extended. The present genetic condition of social classes suggests no inherent, necessary obstacles to the attainment of greater equality in the future; the pseudotheory of the heritability of IQ suggests no inherent obstacle to the attainment of greater equality in the future. The genetic makeup of the population does not cause our widely dispersed system of rewards to persist. The social policies of the past and the inertia of the present cause it to persist. And what the past and present have done, the future can undo.[22] □

Notes

1. Richard Herrnstein's original article, "I.Q.," appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly,* Sept. 1971, pp.43-64. It has also been expanded into a book, *I.Q. in the Meritocracy* (Boston: Little Brown, 1974), but the book is inferior to the article—a work of pseudoscholarship that makes no reference to the standard critical writings in the IQ controversy. Herrnstein also elaborates his position in "More About I.Q.," *Atlantic Monthly,* Dec. 1971, pp. 101-10. An exchange between Herrnstein and Noam Chomsky, in which Chomsky presents an argument similar to that made here may be found either in *Social Policy* III (May-June 1972 and July-August 1972), or in *Cognition,* I, (n.d.), pp. 11-46, 301-10, and 407-18. Jensen's major statements are summarized and discussed in the previous two articles in this series.

2. As I pointed out in my "Race and IQ: The Fallacy of Heritability" in the Spring 1976 *Dissent,* the data on heritability actually tell us nothing about the genetic inheritance of intelligence. For purposes of discussion, though, I assume that there may be some genetic transmission of intellectual capacity of some kind; as long as we don't pretend we can speak with any more precision, it seems a safer assumption than the contrary.

3. At the present moment "assortative mating for intelligence" seems to play a negligible role in the creation of social classes. See Christopher Jencks *et al., Inequality* (New York: Basic Books, 1972), p. 220.

4. Edward Banfield, in his *The Unheavenly City Revisited* (Boston: Little Brown, 1974), explicitly says that the social class attitude types he discusses are ideal types, and that representatives of each type can be found in all actual income classes; see his discussion in chap. 3.

5. This point has been made with great force and clarity by Michael Walzer in his "In Defense of Equality," *Dissent,* Fall 1973, pp. 399-408.

6. In fact, though, the great merit of the normal curve of error, as it is properly called, is its use in determining the *reliability* of generalizations obtained from studying sample populations, as indicated by our ability to replicate our results with a different sample. The normal curve is thus favored by statisticians for its utility, not because it is known to tell "the truth" about the universe. Whether the data from which statistical generalizations are obtained truly measure what they were supposed to is a question of *validity,* and there are no statistical rules for determining that. Rather, we use techniques ranging from our common sense appreciation of whether a measurement technique has been well chosen for its purpose to our observation of attempts to make predictions based on laws deduced from the measurements: in other words, we must *judge.* From here on this is a discussion of the *validity* of IQ measurements as an index of intelligence, and a critique of the argument that Herrnstein and Jensen use to assert this validity.

7. See Michael Young's satire, *The Rise of the Meritocracy* (Penguin Books, 1961). One of the more charming things about Jensen and Herrnstein is that they don't know that Young's book is a satire.

8. Martin Bronfenbrenner, *Income Distribution Theory* (New York: Aldine-Atherton, 1971), p. 57.

9. See Clarence Karier, "Testing for Order and Control in the Corporate Liberal State," *Educational Theory* XXII (Spring 1972), pp. 154-80; see esp. p. 163.

10. The work of Jane R. Mercer of the Sociology Department, University of California at Riverside, is a step in this direction; see the *New York Times,* Feb. 18, 1976.

11. From Herrnstein's use of these occupation studies we also learn that there are no depths to which he won't stoop to bolster a shaky case. In a study from which he quotes in his book, there is a graphic figure horizontally divided into segments each representing a 5-IQ-point spread, and each containing a vertically (and neatly) arranged list of all the occupations for which the mean IQ

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of the people filling those occupations falls within that segment. Thus, if there are more jobs in which people have mean IQs falling within one segment than another, and the job title list under each segment begins on the same line, then the first list will extend farther down the page than the second. The authors do this for all segments, and then draw a line from left to right across the page that curves just below the bottom title in each vertical column. Lo and behold, Herrnstein then tells us the job lists are longer in the middle of the page than at its extremes, and the line takes the shape of "the familiar" bell curve! Art imitates nature again! Unfortunately it turns out that the original authors broke down job titles very finely in the midrange segments while telescoping them together at the extremes. Of the 21 job descriptions given for the 117.5-122.1 (sic) column, 14 could easily be telescoped into the three categories of "clerical office worker," "draftsman," and "lab technician," leaving only 10 job descriptions in that column. In the high-IQ column we could, conversely, break down "accountant" or "chemist" into several subcategories each, with as much reason as the authors decomposed "clerical office worker" in the middle column. Do that throughout, and we will have a straight line running beneath our vertical job title lists—so much for the "bell-shaped curve"! Compare pp. 118-22 (and fig. 3) of *IQ in the Meritocracy* with p. 51 of "I.Q.," and both of them with the original sources: T. W. and M. S. Harrell, "Army General Classification Test Scores for Civilian Occupations," *Educational and Psychological Measurement,* V (1945), pp. 229-39, and Naomi Stewart, "A.G.C.T. Scores of Army Personnel Grouped by Occupation," *Occupations,* XXVI (1947), pp. 5-41.

12. See p. 14 of Jensen's *HER* essay. The quotation is from a 1968 HEW study by Otis Dudley Duncan, which has become a basic source.

13. Although Jencks's *Inequality* is the best-known example of this analysis, the most lucid presentation of such data is that of Sam Bowles and Herb Gintis in their essay on "IQ in the United States Class Structure," first published in *Social Policy* III (Nov.-Dec. 1972 and Jan.-Feb. 1973), and reprinted in Alan Gartner *et al., The New Assault on Equality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), pp. 7-84. They present a series of 10 x 10 matrices, using the 10 deciles of economic success matched with those of IQ, education, and social class background. The entries in the matrix cells are probabilities based on the connection between economic success and the other variables. If the correlations were random, then an individual's chance of appearing in any of the matrix boxes would be 10 percent. A first simple correlation shows that a person in the top tenth IQ class has a 30 percent chance of also being in the top income tenth. However, when the joint effects of IQ, education, and social class on economic success are evaluated with multiple regression analysis, the independent effect of IQ (even assuming Jensen's .80 heritability factor) is revealed as virtually nil. That is, educational attainment and social class are shown to have a strong effect on income regardless of IQ, but IQ regardless of educational attainment and social class has only a very weak effect.

14. A very convincing presentation of the same argument is Lester Thurow's "Education and Economic Equality," *Public Interest,* Summer 1972, pp. 66-81. See also Ivar Berg, *Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery* (New York: Praeger, 1970).

15. Herrnstein's statement is in his reply to critical letters in the "More About I.Q." section referred to in note 1.

16. See Weiss *et al.,* "Work and Automation," *Contemporary Social Problems,* 3rd ed., Robert K. Merton and Robert Nisbet, eds. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch. 1971), p. 557

17. I am indebted to Robert Paul Wolff for suggesting this comparison to me.

18. This claim is made by Daniel Bell in his *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), esp. chaps. 2-3.

19. Bell, *ibid.* See also Fritz Machlup, *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the U.S.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), and *Education and Economic Growth* (New York: N.Y.U. Press, 1975).

20. See the remarks by Alan Gartner and Frank Riessman in *Social Policy,* Nov.-Dec. 1973, pp. 87-90.

21. Andrew Levinson, *The Working-Class Majority* (New York: Penguin Books, 1975).

22. Since the preparation of this article (and the preceding two, in the Spring and Summer issues), the results of three new pieces of research have been reported that are worthy of the reader's attention.

(1) Researchers at the University of Michigan suggest that family size is the strongest predictor of the average IQ of the children in a family—since, in the multichild family, parents will have to give less attention to each additional child. Black families on the average are larger than white (and have a higher incident of one-parent homes). The more children in a family, and above all the more children in a *poor* or otherwise deprived family, the more the conditions I described in my earlier articles as potentially affecting measured test performance are clearly exacerbated.

(2) The Educational Testing Service has completed a six-year study concluding, according to a report in the *New York Times,* that disadvantaged children "enter school with a broad range of abilities and as much self-esteem as any other group but that the process of schooling may hamper these traits." This study, on the surface, seems to contradict the first but actually does not. One could in fact sum them up together by saying that "disadvantage," however defined and caused, puts children into a position in which they will be more likely to receive negative rather than positive messages from both testing and schooling.

(3) An IQ study of black children who were adopted into white families suggests that their placement into a mainstream middle-class environment resulted in a rise of their IQs toward the national norm.

Each of these three studies, of course, upholds an environmentalist interpretation of both the malleability of the IQ gap and the reasons for its existence, and so provides further ammunition for those who believe that IQ tests measure adjustment to a social system as much as or more than they measure anything that might be called "native intelligence." These findings of course justify only very tentative conclusions, and even those should not be drawn until the studies have been subjected to rigorous analysis. □

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Charles C. Killingsworth

How Much Unemployment Do We Need?

In his presidential campaign in 1960, when the average number of unemployed workers was 3.9 million, John F. Kennedy made unemployment one of the major issues and promised to "get this country moving again." After Kennedy won the election, there was a national debate about how best to reduce unemployment; but scarcely anyone questioned the basic proposition that a total of around 4 million unemployed workers was intolerable.

During calendar year 1975, the total number of unemployed averaged 7.7 million workers, or 8.5 percent of the labor force, and Administration spokesmen "projected" unemployment rates well above most postwar recession highs for most of the late 1970s. Yet the public discussion of the unemployment problem was strangely muted. The Administration insisted that no measures to reduce unemployment beyond those already in place were necessary or desirable. Congressional Democrats criticized Administration policies, but many of them quietly backed away from the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill after some prominent economists asserted that this bill would worsen the inflation problem. Some people even argue that we *need* high levels of unemployment, at least for a few years, in order to end inflation.

In the euphoric mid-1960s, it was fashionable to say that never again could a democratic government permit high levels of unemployment for extended periods. Today, almost any proposal to reduce unemployment invites the accusation that the proposer is "in favor of inflation." Many economists and most political figures avoid that accusation like the plague. The present checkmate is largely a product of the view, which has become widely prevalent in the past decade, that there is a "trade-off" between unemployment and inflation—if you want less of one, you must accept more of the other. It is time to take a critical look at this proposition. Present efforts to deal with unemployment should also be evaluated. This article approaches these tasks by undertaking to answer five questions:

1. How much unemployment do we have now?
2. What is the outlook for unemployment?
3. Is there a "trade-off" between unemployment and inflation?
4. What are we doing now about unemployment?
5. What additional steps should we take to deal with unemployment?

1. How Much Unemployment Do We Have Now?

THE NATIONAL unemployment rate for June 1976 was 7.5 percent of the labor force. This was a considerable improvement over the reported rate of 8.9 percent in May 1975. But, as it happened, the June 1976 rate was exactly equal to the highest rate recorded in any preceding postwar recession. Moreover, it had remained essentially unchanged since the preceding February; and the 7.5 percent rate was far above the 5.2 percent unemployment that had been reported for June 1974.

Unemployment figures are misleading. Those for June 1976 were considerably affected by the expansion of two federally financed job creation programs: the Public Service Employment (PSE) program, under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, and the College Work-Study program. Enrollees in both programs are counted as "employed" in the statistics, but the jobs involved are not "market-generated" in any generally accepted sense of that term. The PSE enrollees have had a substantial period of unemployment and were unable to find jobs in the normal labor market. The College Work-Study

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enrollees are students who need to work for pay a few hours per week in order to stay in school (without the program many would presumably be out of school and unemployed).

Ironically, the decline in the unemployment rate from 8.9 percent in May 1975 to 7.5 percent in June 1976 was often cited by those who opposed job creation programs by government. The clear implication was that all of the decrease in reported unemployment was the result of natural forces of economic recovery in the private sector; the assertedly rapid rate of decrease in the reported unemployment rate was said to show that there is no need for governmental job creation. But the fact was that in the absence of rapid expansion of PSE and College Work-Study, or if the enrollees were counted as unemployed rather than employed, the reported unemployment rate would have been 8.1 percent in June 1976 instead of 7.5 percent. Furthermore, it is significant that when the two governmental jobs programs stopped expanding, as they did around the end of 1975, the unemployment rate shortly thereafter stopped dropping. As will be seen shortly, one reason why the discussion of national employment policy has been so muddled in the past 10 years has been the widespread tendency—still with us—to attribute changes in the unemployment rate to the wrong causes. *Distribution* of unemployment among various subgroups of the labor force must also be considered. In June 1976, when the national unemployment rate was reported as 7.5 percent, married men with spouse present had a reported rate of 4.4 percent, while black teenagers had a rate of 40.3 percent. Professional and technical workers had a reported rate of 2.9 percent, and nonfarm laborers a 12.7 percent rate. The rate for government workers was 4.2 percent, and that for construction workers 17 percent. These examples suffice to make the point that the national unemployment rate averages together very large differences in unemployment among various groups. And whatever the national unemployment rate, the individual without a job has a personal rate of 100 percent.

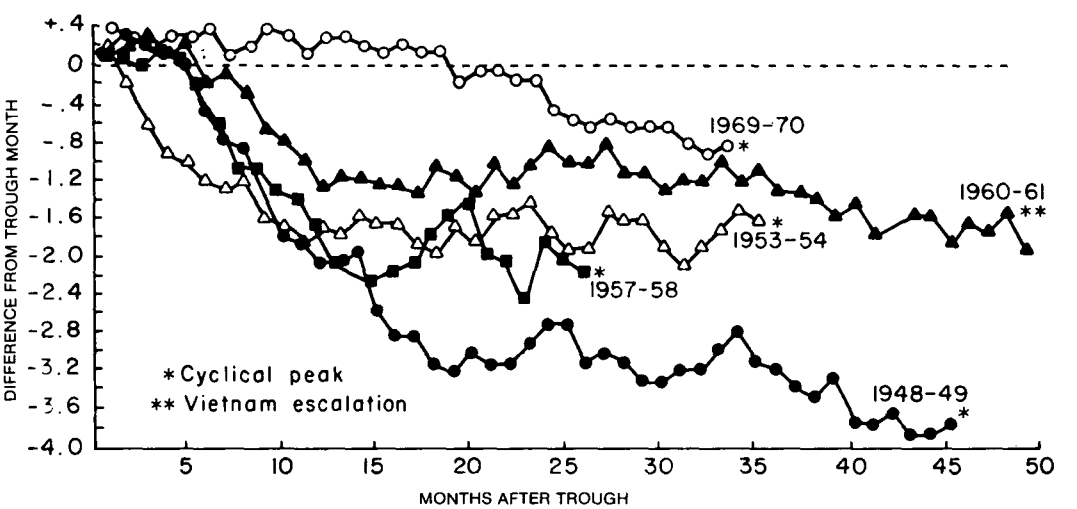
2. What Is the Outlook For Unemployment?

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE has a tendency to recover more slowly than other measures of economic activity after a recession has bottomed out. Scarcely any forecaster now predicts a return to prerecession unemployment levels within the next 12 to 18 months. The consensus appears to cluster around an unemployment rate of 7 to 7.5 percent by the end of 1976 (although the rate for August was 7.9 percent).

Many, perhaps most, economic forecasts nowadays are based on computer simulations of

Chart I

CHANGES IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE IN MONTHS FOLLOWING TROUGH OF FIVE POSTWAR RECESSIONS



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the whole economy. There are other, less mechanistic ways to analyze the outlook for unemployment. One is to consider the behavior of the unemployment rate after the trough month of each of the five postwar recessions. Examination of Chart I shows a pronounced tendency over time for the unemployment rate to recede less and less from the recession high after the economy as a whole has begun to recover. This tendency is particularly apparent in the last two recovery periods. During the recovery period following the 1969-70 recession, the unemployment rate remained close to the recession high throughout the economic expansion. In the present recovery period, the same pattern seems to be emerging.

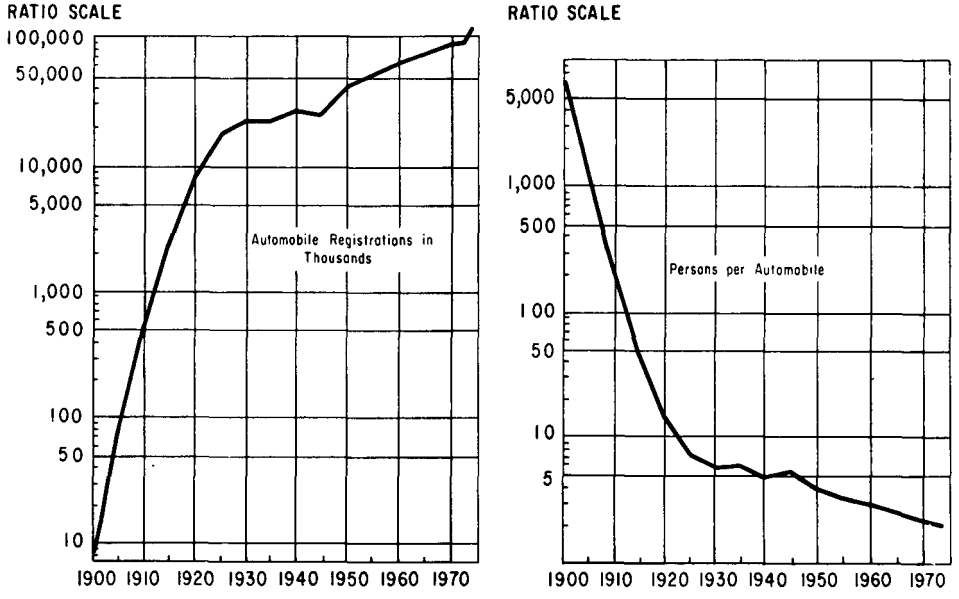
When a rise in unemployment began in early 1970, Chairman Stein of the Council of Economic Advisers asserted that this was a "transitional" problem. In the light of hindsight, it seems unmistakably clear that the low unemployment rates of the late 1960s were "transitional," and that the chronically high unemployment rates of the 1970s reflect the reappearance of some basic imbalances in the economy that had been temporarily masked by the effects of the Vietnam War and the new programs of the Great Society. Furthermore, there is evidence that the lingering effects of some employment problems of the 1950s and 1960s may be augmented by new problems in the late 1970s.

The disturbing fact is that some of the industries that contributed substantially to the growth of employment throughout the years since World War II now show signs of stagnation or decline.

• AUTOMOBILES Chart II shows two striking aspects of the growth of the automobile industry of the United States in the 20th century. The automobile population was growing much more rapidly than the human population throughout most of the century. The chart illustrates the point that, in recent years, the growth rate of this industry has slowed primarily because of an approach to what appears to be an upper limit. The latest figures available indicate that we now have one car for every two men, women, and children in the United States. Recent developments have accentuated the long-run trend toward slower growth. Huge price increases, even if largely caused by forces beyond the control of the industry, have adversely affected sales prospects. Past and anticipated increases in the price of gasoline, insurance, financing, repairs, etc. have contributed to slower sales. Recent news headlines made much

Chart II

AUTOMOBILE REGISTRATIONS AND PERSONS PER AUTOMOBILE IN THE UNITED STATES, 1900-73



SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of the U.S.*, and computations. Registration figures since 1930 include passenger cars and taxis; in prior years they also include buses.

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of large percentage increases in automobile sales in 1976 compared to the previous year. Rarely mentioned was the fact that 1975 was an extremely depressed sales year.

In the early 1970s, the automobile industry was getting about 4 percent of total disposable personal income for its products. In most of 1975 it got only about 2.5 percent of a smaller total. In 1973, the industry employed about 950,000 workers; in 1975, the average was about 200,000 less. Professor Wassily Leontief has estimated that for each 10 workers in the automobile and parts industry, there are about 15 in other industries that supply raw materials. This estimate implies a loss of another 300,000 jobs in the raw materials industries because of the continuing slump in autos, or a total of 500,000 in 1975. Some of this is temporary, as demonstrated by the 1976 increase in sales. But it seems doubtful that the automobile and related industries will ever again provide regular jobs for as large a proportion of the labor force as in the 1970-73 period.

• EDUCATION From 1950 to the 1970s, the U.S. increased its spending on education at all levels almost ten-fold—from $8.8 billion in 1950 to $83 billion in 1972. The percentage of Gross National Product going to education increased from 3.4 percent in 1950 to 7.9 in 1972. Since 1972, these dollars have further increased, but the *share* of education in GNP has gone down. Enrollments are down also, but by much less than the decrease in the share of GNP. No single factor can completely explain this reversal. There has undoubtedly been some public disillusionment with education as the best road to the good life.

The reduction in demand for teachers has had an adverse effect on the labor market for all new college graduates. The sudden change in this sector in turn has to some extent contributed to a devaluation of the college degree, and thus we have a self-reinforcing process. In the years ahead, the likelihood is that education will be taking less than its former share of a growing labor force.

• HEALTH CARE. This has been another major growth industry since World War II. The nation spent $12 billion (4.6 percent of GNP) on health care in 1950; the expenditure in fiscal year 1975 was $118 billion (8.3 percent of GNP). In the three preceding years, however, health care costs as a percentage of GNP leveled off at about 7.8 percent, and the increased percentage in 1975 was partly the result of a sharp decline in total GNP and continued large price increases for health care. From 1960 to 1970, employment in health care fields had increased by about 50 percent (from 2 million to 3 million); but the next decennial census is likely to show little if any further increase in employment, unless comprehensive health care legislation will be passed, which is far from certain.

The greatest expansion in employment in this industry from 1960 to 1970, both in percentage terms and in absolute numbers, was at the lower skill levels. Thus the increase in physicians, dentists, and related practitioners was only 17 percent; the increase in health service workers (assistants, aides, etc.) was 67 percent. If the labor requirements of the health care industry diminish to the replacement level, this will have a significant effect on the supply of new jobs that require only a relatively short training period.

• CONSTRUCTION The construction industry has the highest unemployment rate reported for any of the standard industry classifications—17 percent in June 1976. This is a cyclically sensitive industry, but its present difficulties have deeper roots than the recent recession. In the consumer market, construction and site costs have far outstripped the growth in disposable personal income in the past decade. In the government market, the boom in education construction has ended, and the national network of freeways is virtually completed. From 1950 to 1974, the percentage of the labor force employed in construction decreased somewhat, but in absolute numbers the industry provided 1.2 million more jobs in the latter year than in the earlier. With 750,000 of its work force unemployed, construction is not likely to offer large numbers of new jobs in the next few years—unless the federal government steps in with a big public works program.

• WAR Over the past 40 years, wars and war preparations have had larger effects on the labor market figures than most analysts have recognized. Large increases in the size of the armed forces during a war reduce the number of young men in the civilian labor force. Large orders for conventional weapons and other equipment create large numbers of assembly-line jobs for semiskilled workers. During the period of heavy production for the Vietnam War, from 1965 to 1968, defense industries provided 48 percent of the new blue-collar jobs in the economy. Now war appears to be

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a likely candidate for listing among the declining industries. The number of persons serving in the Armed Forces is the lowest since 1950. In the past five years, national defense expenditures as a percentage of GNP have marched steadily downward—from 9 percent in 1969 to 6 percent in 1974. Some of this reduction may be attributed to the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam; but the GNP percentage for 1974 was the lowest since 1950. In 1976, defense appropriations were increased substantially. Time will tell whether this was purely an election-year phenomenon.

There are, perhaps, other industries that belong on the list of "endangered species," but this listing is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive. My basic point is not that the country is headed for another depression like that in the 1930s. I am confident that the market will again generate a growing total of jobs. But we will face a massive problem of redeployment of our labor force—a problem likely to equal or exceed the comparable problem of the 1950s and early 1960s.

We never really solved that problem, although the effects of the Vietnam War led some people to believe we did. The Vietnam War removed about a million young men from the civilian population (most of whom would otherwise have been in the labor force); and war production provided a large number of temporary jobs for blue-collar workers. The growth of manpower programs in the late 1960s, and the classification of many of the enrollees as "employed" in labor market statistics, also contributed to the appearance of full employment.

The war ended; war production was sharply cut back; hundreds of thousands of former draftees were returned to civilian life; manpower programs leveled off or were, in some instances, reduced in size; and the labor force resumed its normal rate of growth. The forces of change in the American economy left large numbers of workers stranded in the wrong occupations and the wrong cities. Monetary policy was directed toward the control of inflation, and fiscal policy did not avert the deepest recession since the 1930s. The recession aggravated the displacement effects of structural change while leading many analysts to believe that all of the unemployment was caused by the business cycle and the fight against inflation.

The question now is whether we must accept, for the rest of the decade, unemployment rates that have generally been regarded as intolerable since the end of World War II.

3. Is There a "Trade-off" between Unemployment and Inflation?

IN 1958, Professor A. W. Phillips published an article entitled "The Relations Between Unemployment and the Rate of Change of Money Wage Rates in the United Kingdom, 1861-1957." His findings were not entirely free from ambiguity and, at least by contemporary standards, his methodology was not impeccable. But almost immediately the so-called Phillips curve became a major factor in employment policy. Many economists, with varying degrees of success, tried to determine whether the Phillips curve relationship was applicable to the American experience. Some analysts found little need for data. The relationship was so logical and so consistent with economic theory that, if the data did not plainly show it, there must be something wrong with the data. With the passage of time, the relationship tended to become one between the level of unemployment and rate of inflation (rather than the rate of change of money wage rates), although some analysts still recognize that a change in money wage rates is far from synonymous with a change in the general level of prices. The most common statement of the doctrine is that if you want less unemployment, you must accept more price inflation; and if you want less price inflation, you must accept more unemployment.

The data invoked to provide empirical support for this concept have turned out to be fractious. At least for the United States, the alleged relationship cannot be convincingly demonstrated in any straightforward manner. On the simplest level, for example, the data show that the U.S. had quite low unemployment rates—at times less than 3 percent—through most of the years 1951, 1952, and 1953; yet, coincident with the low unemployment rates, we also had very low rates of price increase. There were wage and price controls during part of this period, but their abrupt removal early in 1953 made no difference. On the other hand, in the last three years, we have had unemployment rates that were extremely high by postwar standards—and we have had very rapid price inflation as well.

Various strategies have been followed to overcome such fractiousness of the data. Sometimes the data are plotted on charts, and assertions are made in the text that are not clearly supported by the charts. Leads and lags of varying duration have been tried. Additional variables

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have been thrown into the equations, often with little effort to justify their use except for the fact that more satisfactory results were thereby produced. Some analysts say that the Phillips curve describes a short-run relationship; others say, a long-run relationship. If all else fails, or seems inadequate, there is the useful notion of a *shifting* Phillips curve—that is, a relationship that changes over time.

Despite these difficulties, the Phillips curve has gained increasing influence in policy-making. When men in high office tell us that we must accept high unemployment rates for years into the future in order to bring inflation under control, they are echoing the Phillips-curve doctrine. But, as often happens, as the acceptance of the Phillips curve among economic policy-makers has spread, skeptics have arisen among prominent economists. For example, Chairman Arthur F. Burns of the Federal Reserve System in a recent speech remarked: "Whatever may have been true in the past, there is no longer a meaningful trade-off between unemployment and inflation." Burns proposed a program of direct attack on what he presented as the real causes of inflation, and he prefaced a program for the reduction of unemployment by saying: "I believe that the ultimate objective of labor market policies should be to eliminate all involuntary unemployment. This is not a radical or impractical goal." Others, like Dr. Burns, have pointed out that to a large degree, recent increases in the price level have obviously been caused by factors wholly unrelated to the state of the labor market—the outstanding examples being worldwide crop failures, the unilateral decisions of the Arab oil cartel, and the tightness, in the recent past, in world markets for raw materials.

Forty-five years ago, there was general agreement among the world's leading economists that the *only* way to reduce unemployment was to reduce wages. One of the great achievements of J. M. Keynes was to demonstrate the fallacy of this doctrine. Cutting wages might induce some employers to hire more workers, he said, but he pointed out that this was certainly not the *only* or most effective way to reduce unemployment. Like the insistence on wage-cutting, the Phillips curve concept surely has a kernel of truth in it. *Some* approaches to the reduction of unemployment would be quite likely to generate upward pressure on the price level. But there is really no convincing proof of the widely accepted belief that *any* reduction in unemployment, no matter how much and no matter what means are employed, will cause more inflation. It is true that few, if any, professional economists would state the doctrine quite so crudely. But many, perhaps a majority, would still accept the generalization that there is some kind of "trade-off" between inflation and unemployment. The belief that there is such a trade-off has become an important barrier standing in the way of a substantial reduction in unemployment. I conclude that this widely held belief lacks a substantial basis in either experience or analysis.

4. What Are We Doing about Unemployment?

BY FAR the largest present program for dealing with unemployment is unemployment compensation. What has developed is a kind of *ad hoc* set of programs with some variation in financing arrangements and duration of benefits. In general, the maximum duration for any recipient is 65 weeks, or approximately 15 months. By the best estimates available, it appears that we spent a total of $12.2 billion on all of the main unemployment compensation programs in fiscal year 1975, and it is estimated that we will have spent another $20.6 billion in fiscal 1976. During most of calendar year 1975, between 6 million and 7 million workers were receiving benefits. In the closing months of the year, the number of claimants showed a downward trend, partly as a result of exhaustion of eligibility, and by mid-1976, there were about 4.5 million workers receiving benefits.

In terms of numbers of dollars, the biggest effort to date against unemployment is tax-cutting. The total value of tax cuts, personal and business, and rebates in 1975 is estimated at approximately $22 billion. Although the tax cuts were not motivated solely by benevolence toward the unemployed, the reduction of unemployment was said to be one of the intended benefits. It is difficult to estimate how many jobs were or will be created by the tax cuts. However, the Congressional Budget Office has recently published impact estimates implying that the 1975 tax cuts will produce from 660,000 to 880,000 jobs after 24 months.

The Public Service Employment program is currently financed at a level of about $3 billion per year, and Department of Labor estimates place the current number of enrollments at about 325,000.

There are other programs that aid the unemployed, such as food stamps, AFDC, general relief, and so on, but the amounts going to the

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unemployed cannot be determined with precision. There are also many private programs, such as Supplementary Unemployment Benefits in some industries.

5. What Should Be Done?

FOR THE LAST 40 YEARS, unemployment compensation has been considered "the first line of defense" against the financial losses imposed by unemployment. The system has always included limited duration of benefits, a relationship between wages previously earned and the size of the benefit amount, and employer experience rating. The present use of this system to cope with very long-term unemployment threatens to change the system itself in rather fundamental ways. Such use is also creating future problems for the states that now have the highest level of unemployment.

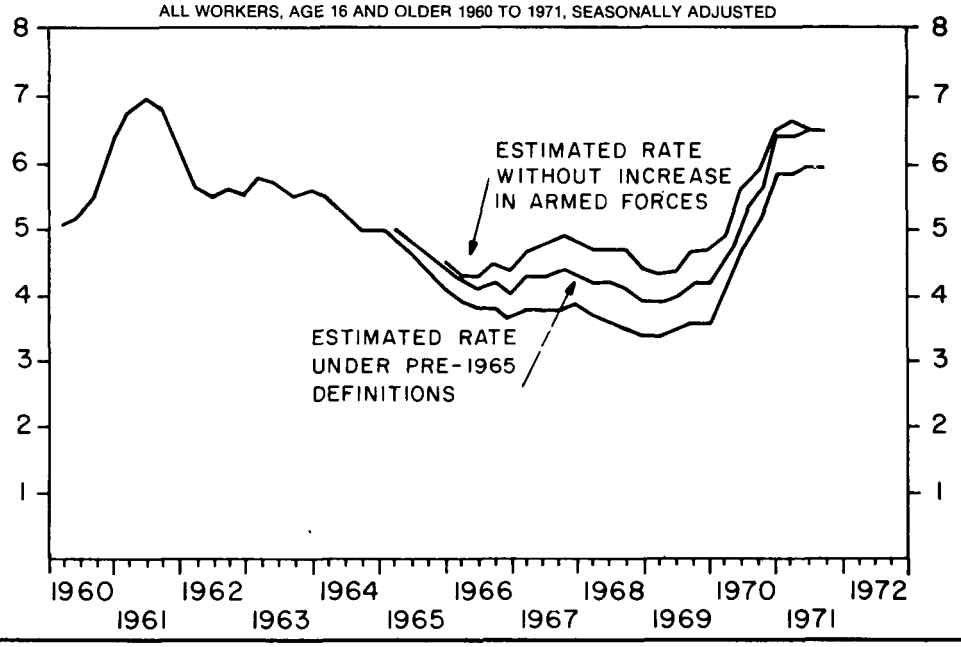
By the end of 1975, 11 states had to borrow funds from the federal government to continue to pay unemployment benefits. By the middle of calendar year 1976, it is likely that more than half of all the states will be borrowing to pay benefits. Those states that exhaust their reserve funds and borrow will have to tax the employers in their boundaries more heavily in the future to repay the loans than will the states that have been more fortunate. Therefore, the states with the largest present unemployment problems will have a competitive disadvantage as compared with the states that are less affected.

The greatest shortcoming of such heavy reliance on unemployment compensation is that the program pays huge sums of money to millions of people for doing nothing and going nowhere. When we are dealing with relatively short-term unemployment, this system functions well. It is a useful invention that has contributed to the moderation of past business cycles and has alleviated hardship. But unemployment compensation is much less defensible as a program that is to deal with a high level of long-term unemployment, particularly when structural changes in the economy contribute to the unemployment. This approach does not help us solve such structural problems—aside from income maintenance. If we want to meet some part of the very long-term unemployment problem with a minimum-income guarantee, we can devise a more rational and more equitably financed system than the present patchwork of add-ons to the existing unemployment compensation system. Under the present system, many people who are not in need are eligible for benefits; others who are in need are not eligible. Unemployment compensation payments do not encourage preparation for a change in occupation or place of residence, which will be

Chart III

U.S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY QUARTERS

ALL WORKERS, AGE 16 AND OLDER 1960 TO 1971, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED



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required of many people if they are to adjust to the effects of structural change. I support the Administration's opposition to further extensions of unemployment benefits, provided that other programs are developed to meet the needs of the long-term unemployed.

Tax-cutting is perhaps irresistibly seductive for politicians and addictive for economists who have joined opponents of "big government" in proclaiming the virtues of tax-cutting. Yet only rarely has the effectiveness of tax-cutting as a remedy for unemployment been dispassionately examined. In discussions during recent years, the main evidence on this point has often been said to be what happened in the late 1960s. We had a $14 billion tax cut in 1964, when the unemployment rate was around 5.4 percent; by 1968, the unemployment rate was down to 3.6 percent (annual average), and in 1969 it was 3.5 percent. Many economists have attributed *all* of this reduction in unemployment to fiscal policy (a few would give some of the credit to monetary policy as well). This interpretation rests upon a fallacy that is easily revealed. Chart III makes the point.

The definition of unemployment was changed twice during the relevant period (1965 and 1967), and the definition changes in combination reduced the reported unemployment rate by about 0.7 percent. The Vietnam War, as earlier noted, reduced the size of the civilian labor force significantly; a conservative estimate of the effect on the reported unemployment rate is a reduction of 0.5 percent. There were other factors in addition to these, and equally unrelated to fiscal and monetary policy, that contributed to lower unemployment during the late 1960s. But considering only the definition changes and the Vietnam War effects, in combination they contributed about two-thirds of the reduction in the reported unemployment rate in the second half of the 1960s. To attribute the *entire* reduction to monetary and fiscal policy imputes to such policy about three times as large an effect as is justified by the facts. The point is not that tax-cutting has no effect on unemployment; rather, the point is that the magnitude of the effect has usually been substantially exaggerated in recent years.

The impact estimates of the Congressional Budget Office support this conclusion. These estimates cover four types of programs for the relief of unemployment: public works, antirecession grants to state and local governments, public service employment, and federal tax cuts. According to the estimates, tax cuts have the smallest impact on employment of any of the four types of programs, assuming equal numbers of dollars are involved. The CBO estimates imply that the net cost per job created by tax cuts after 24 months is in the range of $17,000 to $21,000. As previously noted, the estimated number of jobs created by the 1975 tax cuts will be from 660,000 to 880,000 after 24 months—for an initial cost of about $22 billion. By contrast, the estimated net cost per public service employment job after 24 months is $2,600 to $3,500, according to the CBO study. The heavy emphasis on tax-cutting in the recommendations of many economists is not justified by considerations of cost-effectiveness.

Two other weaknesses of tax-cutting as a remedy for unemployment should be noted. First, the experience of the 1960s shows that this remedy does the least for the most disadvantaged members of the labor force. Despite the tax cut in 1964, and also despite manpower programs emphasizing enrollment of the disadvantaged, black teenage unemployment (for example) did not decline during the great boom of the 1960s. Second, there is general agreement that tax-cutting is not the most effective tool for dealing with structural unemployment. Keynes himself, in the late 1930s, took the position that expansion of aggregate demand by itself would do little to remedy structural imbalances.

Having emphasized the limitations of tax cuts as an instrument of job creation, we must also emphasize the unusual aspect of the situation that made the extension of the 1975 tax cuts imperative. The expiration of the 1975 tax cuts on schedule on December 31, 1975, obviously would have constituted a large tax *increase*. The modest economic recovery thus far achieved could have been endangered. And the impact would have been immediate. We must recognize, at the same time, that this extension will make only a nominal contribution to the reduction of unemployment, if we accept as accurate the impact estimates of the Congressional Budget Office.

FOR A TIME a few months ago, it seemed that Public Service Employment (the PSE program) was almost everyone's favorite remedy for unemployment. More recently, there has been an overreaction against the earlier enthusiasm. The criticisms are numerous and varied: The PSE jobs are not going to the right people; there are "leakages" that reduce the anticipated impact of the nominal job slots by 50 to 90 percent; it doesn't make sense to

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have cities hiring new people with federal money while they are laying off regular employees; etc.

Few informed people would argue that the existing PSE program is the best that could be devised by the mind of man. The present program was the product of legislative compromise, plus an effort to fit the program into the untried framework of state and local administration that is provided under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. Improvements can be made. Tighter eligibility requirements should be enforced. Target groups should be limited. Prime sponsors in addition to governmental units should be encouraged. The "leakage" argument rests far more on speculation than on hard evidence; such leakage, at its worst, would not render the program less effective than tax-cutting.

The most valid criticism of the PSE program is that it is far too small to make a real dent. Currently, the number of job slots it has funded equals about 4 percent of the total number counted as unemployed. In the years of the Great Depression we provided jobs, under roughly equivalent programs, for 30 to 35 percent of the unemployed. Today, a program of comparable size would provide 2.3 to 2.7 million job slots, or eight or nine times as many as are now funded.

Still, it is essential to emphasize two advantages: First, it is better for society in general and better for the individuals involved to pay them for working than for not working. Society gets the benefits of the goods and services thus produced, and the individual has a better chance of hanging on to self-respect and ability to work. Second, a PSE program is a much more cost-effective way of providing jobs for the unemployed than is tax-cutting. As previously noted, the Congressional Budget Office impact estimates imply the lowest net cost per job created for this program; the estimate is a *net* cost of $2,600 to $3,500 per job created after 24 months. In a broader kind of cost accounting, that net dollar cost must be set off against the value of the goods and services produced by the PSE worker.

One consequence of the recent popularity of PSE programs has been a sharp cutback in expenditures for manpower training programs. This is surely short-sighted. Obviously, it does not make sense to train people for jobs that are not available, and manpower training has had a bad press on this point. It now has become faddish to assert that manpower training has been shown to be a "failure." Well, some programs have "failed"; for example, training for welfare clients, especially enrollees in the AFDC program. But it is nonsensical to generalize from such incidents. Most careful studies of manpower training programs show positive rates of return. Some critics have raised questions about the methodology of such studies, and some of the criticisms are justified. But the reality is that, in the social sciences, methodologically impeccable experiments are more of a utopian vision than a practical possibility. At the present writing, the weight of the evidence decidedly supports a finding that manpower training has been successful.

Finally, we need some new approaches to the old problem of depressed areas and sick industries. It is not excessively pessimistic to say that our previous efforts in this area have accomplished little more than to show us what does not work. But there are exceptions. For example, during the 1960s, there was experimentation with programs to increase worker mobility, and some of the programs were reported to be relatively successful. Yet we have no federal programs of this kind today.

For a decade or so, many analysts believed that employment policy was virtually synonmous with fiscal and monetary policy—or, to simplify even further, that if you want to reduce unemployment, you need only to reduce federal taxes. The ultimate illusion was that government had mastered the unemployment problem and all that remained was to master the technique of "fine tuning." The development of persistent and excessive unemployment after U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam and the catastrophic rise of unemployment in the current recession may have corrected the complacency of the 1960s and the early 1970s. But excessive optimism has been replaced by virtual paralysis. The source of the paralysis is a new simplism: that the country needs to have 7 million or 8 million unemployed workers, at least for the next few years, in order to bring inflation under control. The main point of this paper is that this "need" is another illusion. It is certainly possible to find ways of reducing unemployment that would make the inflation problem worse. But the rate of unemployment does not uniquely determine the rate of inflation. Unemployment can be reduced far below 7 or 8 million without aggravating inflation. The one weapon that will not help is "benign neglect." □

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Edgar Litt

Social Justice or Excellence?

British Labour's Choices in Education

In Britain today, Labour ministers carry on the "long revolution" for social justice in the face of a downward economic spiral. The British Labour party unites evangelical, working-class sentiment ("The Red Flag Holds the People's Blood," delegates sing at every party conference) with an Oxford-dominated Cabinet. It is this improbable chemistry that has reshaped British education. Gone is the Eleven-Plus examination, that bulwark of educational discrimination by class origins. Now a state-maintained, comprehensive system receives vast sums of public money, while the ancient "public schools" must rely on private support. The number of sixth-form (American high school) graduates doubled between 1963 and 1973, as did the number of full-time students in higher education. These are mighty accomplishments set against the backdrop of an "Upstairs-Downstairs" society in which 5 percent of the population control 70 percent of private wealth, and in which schooling at Eton and Cambridge remain key paths to elite status.

The core of Labour's education policy is the comprehensive school designed to provide quality education regardless of social class background (only 30 percent of British youth complete secondary school, a decade ago a mere 15 percent). The comprehensive school is the socialist equivalent of the old "public schools" in selecting the one in six students who will enroll in the higher educational system. Caught between the comprehensives and the "public schools" are the direct grant schools, such as Manchester Grammar, which are partially state-supported and of high academic quality. American equivalents of the British tripartite system are our prestigious private schools (Choate, Andover); our regular public school systems; and our high-quality suburban systems (Newton, Alexandria, Santa Barbara) that are largely supported by property taxes of upper-middle-class residents. The fate of the "public schools"—Labour's strategy is to neutralize, not nationalize, them—and of the two different sorts of state schools are issues that separate Labour from Margaret Thatcher's Conservative party, and, to a lesser extent, from Jeremy Thorpe's Liberal party.

Labour's higher education policy is guided by the "binary principle," enunciated by former Education Minister Tony Crossland. The binary policy states that there will be two higher education systems at degree level; an *autonomous sector* of universities centrally funded through that ingenious conduit, the University Grants Committee, and a *public sector* of postsecondary vocational institutions (Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Colleges of Further Education) jointly funded by central and local governments. During the 1960s, the demand for university places pushed expansion in the autonomous sector. The Robbins Report urged university expansion and became one of the few official reports in British history to be implemented immediately by the government. A dozen new univer-

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sities were opened, and the university student population doubled within a decade.

Cynics point out that universities were expanded in order to satisfy the growing professional class whose sons and daughters could not study at Oxford or Cambridge, and who sought an education that was updated but similarly prestigious. So the progeny of Lord Robbins were located in the cathedral towns of York and Bristol, rather than in the urban sprawl of Greater London and the West Midlands. Here the children of senior civil servants and university professors go to university.

But while social reform often benefits the professional class, that is to say, the sons and daughters of the reformers, more than professional self-interest is involved. British universities have never been working-class institutions. They are highly selective, shaped by a history of academic tradition and social realities in a society where 70 percent of the labor force are skilled, semiskilled, or unskilled workers. British university graduates, regardless of class origins, are not attracted to industry and commerce in significant numbers. The cathedral town, then, is a suitable site for universities devoted to high intellectual standards and an antivocational ethos.

The university expansion did increase opportunities for clever working-class youngsters within the stratified confines of British society. When comparable indices of social class and the quality of academic institutions are considered, the percentages of university graduates from working-class backgrounds in Britain and America are about the same. Many American colleges are simply not universities in the British sense of the word, and our drop-out rates are much higher than those in Britain where governmental student grants sustain the select minority. Nevertheless, the shape of the future was clear by the late 1960s. The continued decline of England's political economy and the Labour government's use of education on behalf of the urban, working-class majority presented a dilemma regarding universities and basic research.

Elizabeth House and the Everton Strategy

LABOR'S EFFORTS are directed toward holding on to hard-won social gains in a deteriorating economy—the so-called Everton Strategy. Everton is one of the best teams of English First Division Football. Religious strife with crosstown rival Liverpool has subsided since the days when Evertonians upheld Irish-Catholic honor, and Liverpudlians stood for English-Protestant virtue. Today, big-time soccer combines money, passion, and skilled working-class players with the determination portrayed by Richard Harris in the movie *The Sporting Life*. Everton's strategy is simply not to lose. (Teams are awarded two points for each win, one point for each tie, and no points for each loss.) Everton often plays for a tie, and unspectacular play is compensated by team success during the ordeal of a nine-month season.

About 200 miles south of Lancashire, the Department of Education and Science occupies Elizabeth House, a plate-glass building adjoining Victoria Station, South of the Thames. The D.E.S. is not a working-class institution, but Labour party ministers pursue the "Everton Strategy" with the tenacity of any "Scouser" on a Liverpool football pitch. Socialists, their advisers, and civil servants are determined not to lose the hard-won gains of the "long revolution." They, too, will play for a tie in the autumn of social-class politics—and for an unspectacular but inexorable movement toward equality. The Labour government includes men and women who recall the class humiliation of an Eleven-Plus examination, the social differences between Eton or Winchester and Stoke Common School or Birmingham Comprehensive, and those upper-class voices heard not too long ago across the table at Cambridge or in an Oxford seminar. They are aware of the little time and few resources for American-style task forces on educational innovation. "Our entire educational budget," observes an L.E.A. official in Yorkshire, "could be spent on new buildings

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and modern equipment.''* A second-class economic power cannot afford the costs of university and research expansion, and modern mass education. It is Labour's policy to fall back on the essentials of its program and support the comprehensive and public higher educational sectors. ''If the choice is between an adult literacy program and an expensive physics project, then I wish our scientists luck in Brussels or in Washington,'' observes a senior D.E.S. official.

Two Cultures and One Budget

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION in British education unfolds through the ''three Rs''—resources, reorganization, and research. Though the D.E.S. is cut off from the centers of governmental activity, physically separated from Whitehall across the Thames, its ministers reshape political power. Recent Education ministers—Tony Crossland (Labour), Edward Boyle (Conservative), and Reginald Prentice (Labour)—have enlarged the department's staff so that it can deal effectively with the ''money men'' in Treasury and with educational pressure groups. Imagine that the presidents of the leading public and private American universities, from Harvard to Berkeley, decided to give 5 percent of their combined budgets to the public schools. Imagine further that the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare reorganized community and state colleges into unified institutions. Complete this improbable scenario with a significant transfer of research funds, for instance from projects sponsored by the National Science Foundation to projects sponsored by the AFL–CIO, and you approximate the changes in British education.

Under the leadership of Reginald Prentice, education's share of the 1974 budget increased by 4 percent despite the economic situation. English universities suffered a net loss of about 20 million, or 5 percent of their combined budget during 1974–1975. While the public higher educational sector and the comprehensive system also felt the inflationary spiral, during 1973–1975, an additional 23 million pounds was made available to Local Educational Authorities for use in schools and Polytechnics. The sum of these budget decisions was to transfer the equivalent of 50 million *uninflated* American dollars from the universities to the rest of British education. No White Paper or Cabinet decision dictated this shift in resources commiting Elizabeth House to a long-range ''Everton Strategy'' in the persuasive language of pounds and shillings.

Another set of budgetary commitments reinforced D.E.S. policy. The key men in the public higher education sector are Polytechnic directors, and the key actors in the comprehensive program are the headmasters of the state-maintained secondary schools. Both groups received an 11 percent salary increase—*in constant pounds*—during 1975, while professors at the apex of British universities were suffering a net 3 percent salary decrease, in constant pounds. The salaries now awarded to Polytechnic directors and secondary school headmasters often equal those of the vice-chancellor (in effect, ''The President'') of British universities. The thrust is toward making employment in the public sector more attractive than in the universities.

Reorganization is the second way of changing British education. The Department of Education and Science now contributes to the L.E.A.'s 65 percent of all funds available to nonuniversity education, an increase of 15 percent in London's share (for example) within three years. Capital improvements in excess of £ 50,000 for education must now be authorized by the Department of Education and Science, unless a local authority chooses the painful course of requesting increased local taxes. The D.E.S. is using its increased power to make the comprehensive schools the sole alternative to the expensive and exclusive ''public schools.'' This means a long-term effort to merge comprehensives with direct-grant

*L.E.A. stands for Local Education Authority.

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schools, a move resisted by middle-class supporters of the latter. In such cities as Leeds and Manchester, direct-grant schools have become *the* centers of excellence and the gateway to universities and the professions. So far, the power of these constituencies within the Labour party has frustrated D.E.S. plans to merge the direct-grant and comprehensives into a unified state-maintained system.

Postsecondary reorganization involves efforts to merge the patchquilt of Polytechnics, colleges of education, and colleges of further education coexisting within a single local authority. Consolidating these institutions into a unified public higher educational unit within each region and city more closely resembles a continental model than the historic pluralism of central-local co-determination within the United Kingdom. The die has been cast toward both a unified comprehensive system below, and a unified public sector above.

The redistribution of research and development support is further evidence of Labour's education policy. Although centers of basic research support remain influential in the interlocking realm of the Social Science Research Council, Science Research Council, and the Royal Society, the drift is from open-ended cultural and scientific support to programmatic research designed to rescue a beleaguered political economy. Increasingly, Cabinet ministers distribute so-called science and research funds. Labour ministers, such as Michael Foote (Employment), Anthony Wedgewood Benn (formerly at Industry), and Peter Shore (Trade) used active "research units" to infuse funds into trade union projects, worker's economic cooperatives, adult education programs, and vocational training. The belief that worker incentives are critical to economic productivity is central to Labor's Industrial Relations Act and the partnership between the private and public economies. These policies complement D.E.S. plans, and direct "research grants" to trade unions at the workplace compensate for the absence of a completed sixth-form education among the majority of adult workers. Support of adult education and vocational courses are designed primarily for a smaller group who drop out after completing their secondary education.

"We are supporting these programs by living on the capital of our intellectual heritage," says a scholar with Labour party attachments. The "heritage" is one shaped by generous support for speculative scientific investigation, characterized in the past by a pursuit of scientific problems without regard to short-term payoffs. The hallmarks of British science have been original discoveries, a pattern that still yields Nobel Prizes in such specialties as astronomy and merited membership in the Royal Society to medical researchers without any university affiliations. When theoretical physicists complain of meager support, and when mathematicians speak of the drought in basic medical research, it is reasonable to conclude that there is warranted concern in the "invisible college" at the frontiers of British science. University dons and science investigators worry that British intellectual capital will be expended on behalf of stop-gap projects that don't deal with the roots of national economic problems.

The drift in British educational policy thus poses a fundamental choice between "excellence" and "social justice." The judgment of a cultivated and socially humane Conservative party spokesman on education and culture is clear enough:

> In the name of class justice, they [the Labour party] level down every sign of intellectual creativity. It would be amusing to watch these Oxford graduates play "Working Class" were the consequences not so tragic.

This judgment is not supported by evidence regarding university expansion after the Robbins Report when, despite forebodings about leveling among senior British academics, the number of "A" Level (university qualified) students increased by about 20 percent. Still, contemporary concern about the decline of British "high culture" is a valid consideration. British intellectual quality has always depended upon the fruits of the university tutorial, the solid curriculum of the sixth form, and mature scientific research and scholarship.

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Above all, the idea of a British university, now that concentration in a single subject has been discarded, is carried forth by broad-gauged graduates at home in the community of scholars and public affairs. One need not romanticize the old class-biased educational system to regret the erosion of an erudite culture.

Against this stands Labour's commitment to educating a self-governing citizenry of productive men and women in times of economic distress. It is ironic to observe these ministerial "Cavaliers" (sophisticated intellectuals *au courant* in the world of ideas) execute "Roundhead" policies—bricks and mortar for the comprehensives, programs in industrial design for the Polytechnics, concern with the education of the least skilled and literate everywhere.

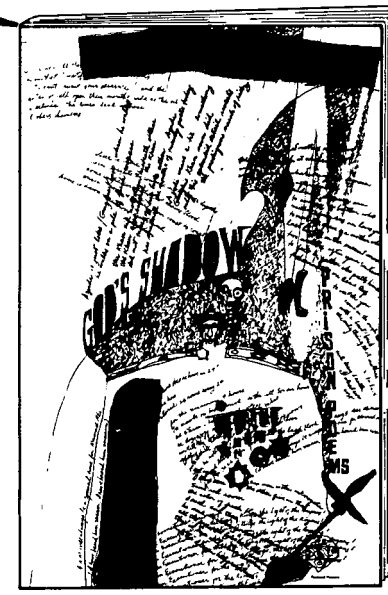
Let R. H. Tawney, the architect of Labour's commitment to educational justice, have the last word:

> If persons whose work is different require different kinds of professional instruction, that is no reason why one should be excluded from the common heritage of civilization of which the other is made free by a university education. . . . Those who have seen the inside both of the lawyer's chambers and of coal mines will not suppose that of the inhabitants of those places of gloom the former are more constantly inspired by the humanities than are the latter, or that conveyancing is in itself a more liberal art than hewing. □

GOD'S SHADOW

Prison Poems

By Reza Baraheni



This is a collection of poems, savage and tender by turns, written by an Iranian man of letters (now in exile in the United States) concerning his experiences while a political prisoner in Iran. The poems deal unsparingly with prison life—torture, beatings, and homosexual rape—and there is no doubt that part of their force derives from the author's political conviction, paradoxically strengthened under the stimulus of oppression. **$8.95**

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Reza Baraheni

Prison poems

The 40-year-old Iranian writer and scholar Reza Baraheni, who was for 13 years a professor of English literature at the University of Tehran, is the author of 26 volumes of poetry, fiction, criticism, and translations (in Persian). In his Masculine History *(1972)—a book soon banned but an immediate underground success—in a newspaper article, "The Culture of the Oppressor and the Culture of the Oppressed" (1973), and in other writings, Baraheni spoke out against the Shah's despotic monarchy and racial oppression, and pleaded for the cultural freedom and autonomy of Iran's ethnic minorities. These bold publications led to his arrest and 102 days' cruel imprisonment. (According to Amnesty International, the Shah's Secret Police constantly holds between 25,000 and 100,000 political prisoners.) Pressure from abroad effected Baraheni's release and emigration. He now lives with his wife and two children in the U.S., teaches creative writing and lectures at college campuses on poetry, and on politics and oppression in Iran.*

The poems below, which appeared first in the English journal Index on Censorship, *are from the new Indiana University Press book* God's Shadow: Prison Poems, *by Reza Baraheni,* *copyright © 1976 by Indiana University Press. They are reprinted here by permission of the publisher.* *The translation is the author's own.* — Eds.

Doctor Azudi, the professional

Azudi is just like
Genghis Khan when he walks
he walks on a pile of fresh corpses

the Khan did not clean his teeth either
the Khan also belched the Khan
did not take off his boots either Azudi
has shattered the mouths of twenty poets today

Azudi wears a tie something
Genghis Khan never did
only this splendid detail reveals the prodigious march of history

F.M.'s autobiography

Sir
it's not easy for me to talk to you
here in prison there's a rumor that you're
a poet I never wrote a word of poetry in
my life I never even read a word of poetry

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but I can tell you about the life of
a laborer in which there's no poetry
if the pain in your feet permits if you can
forget the questions you will have to answer
in an hour if you don't fear that your brother
has been taken away or that your mother has had
a stroke if you can believe that your daughter
has not been seized listen to the words of this humble
prisoner: I am nineteen years old when I was
three my mother beat me at six it was my father who
whipped me I started work when I was five
when I was eight the landlord's
sixteen-year-old son tried to rape me he did not
succeed because after all everything has its
limit the mulberry cannot carry the fruit
of the melon and the ant is not made to carry
a tree the prick of a thick-necked rich youth
who eats butter honey meat chicken and turkey
cannot dig into the arse of a working boy
who shits none of these things but when I was
twelve the landlord succeeded in taking the
revenge of the rich bastard my father hanged himself
he'd wanted to kill himself for years now he
used my disgrace for his excuse at fourteen I threw up
the bricks of the master's house alone at fifteen
I was pushed from a rug factory to a sock factory to
a textile factory at sixteen the leaden air of the
printing house set in my chest I'm a typesetter
now for three years I type-set *Long Live the Shah*
six days ago I decided to type-set *Long Live Liberty*
they got me five days ago they've been pulling my
nails ever since I've forty nails twenty of them
belong to my hands and feet and twenty
more belong to my hands and feet in my mind
Ardalan raped me three days ago they haven't
raped you, have they? that's not important
Ardalan is like a copulating dog his teeth
marks are still in my shoulders there were
of course lashes slaps kicks and smuts too
you're a poet and they say poets know
many things tell me what I should do next
what they will do next pardon me for this headache
I've given you well what can we do after all
it's a laborer's life
someone should tell us what to do □

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Cynthia Price Cohen

Crimes of "Being"

There is a group of citizens in our country who are subjected daily to flagrant denials of their fundamental rights. They are deprived of their liberty without notice, for acts that do not constitute crimes. Such treatment of any other group would be denounced as intolerable, yet we continue to justify the handling of these citizens as "protective" rather than punitive. They are the children we bring before our family courts, not as juvenile delinquents, but as "persons in need of supervision." Their only crimes are the crimes of "being": "being" truant, incorrigible, or ungovernable. The upsurge in *real* crimes committed by juveniles demands the reevaluation of an unjust policy that clogs our courts with these children and thereby forces superficial handling of dangerous youths who require greater care.

The philosophy that originally brought all juveniles under the jurisdiction of the family court sprang from the doctrine of *parens patriae*, which regarded the sovereign as the father of all the children in his realm. In our country, the state replaced the king. And the 19th-century social welfare movement, which began its thrust in the juvenile area by removing children from adult prisons, reached its apex with family-court legislation toward the end of that century. As a result of the Family Court Acts of the 1880s, the cases of children under 16 still are handled only in a civil court. Even today, there are no trials; hearings are completely private, records confidential, length of placement is based on progress and the criteria for this placement are decided by the judge.

But what appeared to be innovative and fair in 1900 now has become a method that sanctions preventive detention for indeterminate lengths of time, imposed behind closed doors, without jury or witnesses, and, until recently, without benefit of counsel. It is absurd to expect Victorian legislation to solve today's juvenile problems. Sheer numbers alone make the patriarchal type of administration impossible. We can take a major step toward modernization of the juvenile court by removing from its jurisdiction all youngsters who have committed no crimes and therefore are not considered juvenile delinquents. Court treatment of noncriminal youths varies from state to state. However, an increasing number of jurisdictions now separates this group from *bona fide* delinquents by placing them in a special category. In New York they are designated "persons in need of supervision" or PINS, and more than one-third of all juvenile cases brought in New York annually are the result of PINS petitions.

These PINS indeed have committed no crimes—and yet, they stand in court, before a judge: for they are the victims of 19th-century morality. The typical PINS child is 12 to 14 years old, male, and belongs to a minority group. He comes from a deprived home, with parents who have too little energy and too many problems to be able to deal with a difficult child. His "ailments" are common to many teenagers: staying out past curfew, refusing to do chores, talking back, hanging out with objectionable friends, fighting with brothers and sisters. Not all PINS children, of course, are boys. And, in the case of a girl, the problem often is pregnancy. These are just some of the "acts" covered by the blanket definition of "incorrigible" or "ungovernable." In New York State, only two such acts are required for a child to be declared a PINS, and these acts need not occur within the same year.

Oddly, the PINS concept does represent a modernization. Prior to 1960, noncriminal juveniles were given the same treatment as those now designated juvenile delinquents. Social pressure forced the division into two groups and

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promised separate placement as well. At least 13 states joined in this movement in an effort to eliminate problems resulting from the mixing of criminal and noncriminal youths in state training schools. But the hoped-for benefits have failed to materialize. The designation of PINS has developed a stigma similar to that attached to juvenile delinquency itself. The result is a grave miscarriage of justice. Parents who can't handle their children take them to family court and have them sent to a training school, where they can be legally kept until they are 21 years old. In the training school they receive virtually no rehabilitation and are often exposed to criminalizing experiences.

Supposedly, these children enjoy the rights of all citizens. In reality, however, the PINS statute condones numerous constitutional violations. The most glaring springs from the use of such words as "incorrigible" and "ungovernable"—words almost impossible to define. The dictionary provides little assistance, for the word "delinquent" is used to define "incorrigible." Yet, according to the statute, "incorrigible" is something other than "delinquent"—and so these definitions are utter nonsense. All this is important because our entire legal system is based on the behavior patterns of hypothetical reasonable people deemed to be making a free choice each time they engage in illegal activity. In order to guarantee this freedom of choice, laws must be formulated in language clear enough to prevent any claim of misunderstanding.

The Supreme Court has interpreted our Constitution to preclude any statute "so vague that men of common intelligence must necessarily guess at its meaning and differ as to its application."[1] This requirement insures that prospective wrongdoers will have adequate warning of acts to be avoided. But "incorrigibility" is not an act, nor does the word give any indication of acts it supposedly includes. The average PINS statute indeed provides no warning. Remember that these prospective wrongdoers are under 16 and so the situation becomes even more absurd. Murder, burglary, and truancy they can understand; "incorrigibility," never!

HOW DO these children reach the courts, if they do not break the law in the ordinary sense? They are brought there by parents and teachers who consider their behavior "too much." But as we know, behavior annoying to one adult may be ignored by another or viewed as typically adolescent. The child therefore is at the mercy of the adults with whom he comes in contact. There need only be provocation sufficient to trigger the adult to sign a PINS petition, and the youngster becomes enmeshed with the court. Then the problem of vagueness arises through the interpretation of a given judge. Without the guidance of an unambiguous statute, the judges will penalize most harshly those acts most distasteful to themselves personally.

The role of subjectivity is illustrated by the number of children who do not reach the family court. In a study of 337 college students who were presented with a list of 34 offenses typically cited in juvenile cases, all the students admitted committing 10 or more of these offenses, but only in rare cases was any action taken against them.[2] Children from middle- or upper-income families, as you might expect, are seldom involved in PINS proceedings. Instead, they are sent to psychologists or boarding schools. State training schools are the poor man's Choate.

Subjectivity is not the only shortcoming of statutory vagueness; it also prevents an adequate defense. Without sufficient notice of the acts charged, it is impossible to provide knowledgeable counsel. Therefore, lawyers often make no effort at defense. It is significant that in 1972 the law guardians of Rockland County, N.Y., presented guilty pleas before trial in every PINS case they handled.

In practice, vagueness has allowed the use of the PINS statute to cover situations for which it was never intended. A parent brings a child to court as an "incorrigible." Investigation reveals that the case is actually one of parental neglect. It is far easier, however, to proceed with a PINS petition, which the parent is willing to sign, than to mount a neglect case, which the parent will undoubtedly challenge. The rights of the child are sacrificed for the sake of simplicity. The child is removed from the home, at a tremendous price.

Finally, a vague statute is an exercise in *ex post facto* lawmaking, another constitutional prohibition: interpretation of the law occurs *after* the

[1] *Connally* v. *General Construction Co.*, 269 U.S. 385, 391.

[2] Austin L. Porterfield, *Youth in Trouble* (Fort Worth: Leo Potishman Foundation, 1946). This study compared students from three colleges in northern Texas with young people whose cases were tried in the local juvenile court.

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youngster is brought to court and is therefore retroactive.

Barring a complete change in wording, the PINS statute, as it stands, also violates the Eighth Amendment protection against cruel and inhuman treatment; and this, for two distinct reasons. First, because it allows indeterminate sentencing, based on indefinite standards of progress. Second, because it punishes not an act but a state of being. The *only* definite act listed in any PINS-type statute is truancy. All other listed acts are not acts at all but conditions or states of being: "ungovernable," "incorrigible," "wayward," etc.

The very behavior these statutes seek to preclude may even be necessary to an adolescent's emotional growth. The teen years are a time of testing, of breaking away from parental control and values—values that may be reincorporated as the young person reaches maturity. Adults have historically considered the behavior of adolescents anathema; the gulf between generations seems a fact of life. Incarceration is hardly the proper response to this age-old conflict.

If, however, one does examine the laws carefully, it becomes apparent that children under 16, or even 18, are not separate legal entities. The state considers them only in relation to their parents, who are their legal guardians, and the parents are responsible for their minor children's negligent acts. Yet children cannot take legal action against their parents for injuries they incur through parental neglect. Parents indeed have total control over their children's health and education, with the court stepping in only in matters of life and death. The New York Penal Code expressly allows the use of physical force to maintain parental discipline, regardless of psychological effects on the child.

Given this view of parent-child relations, it is inconsistent to allow a parent who has played a major role in shaping the child's personality to use the court to punish the child for behavior the parent had a part in shaping.

I do not advocate joint imprisonment of parents and children; rather, I would suggest that the court just is not the place to handle juvenile misbehavior. On a practical level, the court is totally unequipped to provide any real help for PINS cases. The court can offer no services that cannot be more readily obtained through social service agencies. In a typical situation, parents will bring a child to court as a last resort, expecting the court to supply the discipline they have been unable to provide themselves. Often they only expect the judge to issue a warning, not fully realizing the extent of the forces that have been put in motion. Once involved in the judicial process, a parent rarely has the option of backing out. So the parent too becomes a victim—a victim of disappointment. What the parent really wants is for the child to shape up, and this is beyond the court's power to ordain.

Statistics relating to PINS adjudication provide further insight into court functioning. For example, during the judicial year 1969-70, the New York Family Court handled 9,646 PINS petitions, compared with 14,404 delinquency proceedings. Approximately 39 percent of all juvenile cases coming before the court that year were noncriminal. Yet nearly twice the proportion of PINS cases are put into training schools than an equivalent sample of juvenile delinquents!

The reasons for this appear to lie in the basic personality differences of the two groups. The juvenile delinquent takes his problems to the streets, while the PINS acts out at home. Juvenile delinquents assert themselves by breaking laws, by stealing, mugging, and vandalizing; PINS direct their hostilities at annoying authority figures by talking back and disobeying orders. Ironically, the juvenile delinquent is easier to live with at home, and less of a problem to institutions when sent away. Juvenile delinquents, having committed a crime, fully expect to "do some time," while the PINS' rage is fanned by what he sees as unjust, unreasonable punishment.

Retaining the juvenile-court jurisdiction over crime-committing delinquents can be justified as a proper exercise of the state's police power in order to protect its citizens. There can be no justification for the court's retention of PINS cases: these children do not represent such a threat, they are not criminals.

If we are to bring our juvenile courts into the 20th century, we must begin by asking what we can reasonably expect from them. Surely, the paternalistic approach has failed. The best we can hope for is some sort of rudimentary rehabilitation for those children who are dangerous to society. Perhaps even this goal is too optimistic. The future may force us to apply more of the standards of criminal law to juvenile cases. This trend has now begun with recent Supreme Court decisions that instituted the following requirements in juvenile cases: notice of specific charges; right to counsel; privilege against self-incrimination; right to cross-examination of witnesses, and transcript of proceedings. None of these had previously been required. Still lacking are the right to jury trial and open, public hearings. It is possible that the

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upsurge in dangerous crimes committed by youths 14 years old and under will bring a reevaluation of these issues too.

There is simply no place for "incorrigibles" in the juvenile court. We cannot expect to handle all the problems of youth through legal means. We have a network of public and private social welfare agencies, staffed with personnel trained to help the family in trouble. Any problem a PINS boy or girl faces can be handled far better by such an agency than in court. In a jurisdictional change, the only loss for the child will be the stigma attached to a PINS adjudication. And that would be highly desirable. □

On Politics and Character

Before Tom Hayden's unsuccessful campaign for the Democratic senatorial nomination in California is quite forgotten, a comment is in order. Running against an ineffectual opponent, Hayden received 1.2 million votes, an impressive showing. Many of the things he said during his campaign were the kind of things liberals and socialists have been saying. Should we therefore have brushed aside the differences we had with Hayden when he was a spokesman for the New Left in the late 1960s? Is it true that "the radicalism of the 1960's is fast becoming the common sense of the 1970's"? (Tom Hayden, Op Ed Page, *New York Times,* July 12, 1976.)

I for one wouldn't have voted for Hayden if I lived in California—even if his speeches were often close to what democratic socialists believe.

None but the most flea-bitten sectarian has not changed political positions over the years. All of us have looked back upon formerly held views with a sense of wonderment or embarrassment. Still, there's generally been some relationship between past and present thinking. Usually, with greater or lesser candor, we acknowledge these changes and offer explanations, rationalizations, excuses.

But that's not the case with Hayden. His sentence about "the radicalism of the 1960's" becoming "the common sense of the 1970's" is all very well as a catchphrase, but (a) it's not true and (b) it's not serious. In fact, Hayden insists upon affirming that, in some ways, he's still the same fellow he was seven or eight years ago. He quotes, with grim satisfaction, a Fresno policeman as saying: "You're going to get a lot of votes from people who hated you a few years ago. We were wrong and misled."

And Tom Hayden—*he* wasn't wrong?

Remember what he stood for: the politics of "confrontation" ("up against the wall, mother. . ."); the politics of violence (his article in the *New York Review* on Newark riots); the politics of authoritarianism (his defense of the North Vietnamese Communist regime). With what scorn Hayden attacked *Dissent* editors for advocating something so "reformist," so "compromising," as working in the Democratic party! Not for that Hayden the messy devices of "coalition politics."

Or consider Vietnam. Hayden didn't merely, like many of us opposed to the war, believe that it was wrong for the U.S. to intervene; he actively preferred, championed a victory of the Communist regime in Hanoi.

Well, Hayden seems to have changed with regard to U.S. politics: he even wears suits—oh, the shame of it! With regard to left-authoritarian regimes, he may be somewhat silent these days, but as far as we know he has not changed.

Doesn't a man have a right to change on some things and not on others? Of course, certainly. But then, if he claims to be a serious political person, he has an obligation to explain to his friends and followers why he has changed on one thing and not another. Otherwise, he is behaving precisely like the manipulative leader whose existence Hayden used to say he deplored.

Our guess is that a good deal of the 1960s remains in Hayden's politics, but that the left-authoritarian underlay is for the time being kept covered. That's enough to make socialists and liberals profoundly suspicious. But perhaps more important than the specific content of his politics is the way he goes about making changes. He has not behaved like a responsible, democratic figure who tries to explain to friends and followers why certain changes are required. All he says is, "times are different." How? In what respect? Is *he* any

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different? Does he still think in that style of self-righteous, half-suppressed fanaticism that, together with his unquestioned talents, characterized him in the late 1960s?

A leader speaking in the name of a better world has, at the least, the obligation to tell us honestly and fully why he has changed his ideas. The extent to which he satisfies these fraternal and democratic requirements is more important, finally, than the "correctness" of anything he may be saying at the moment, or just for a moment.

—S.P. □

Steven Kelman

The Bergman Affair

The Ingmar Bergman affair in Sweden involves both facts and implications. As for the fact: was Bergman guilty of tax evasion? why was Bergman hauled away while directing a rehearsal of Strindberg's *Dance of Death* at the Royal Dramatic Theater in Stockholm? As for the implications: what does the handling of the Bergman case say about the Swedish tax system? about Swedish society after over 40 years of Social Democratic rule?

Tax authorities began the investigation of Bergman as part of ongoing investigations—sharpened over the past few years—of possible evasion involved in fund transfers between individuals or companies in Sweden and subsidiaries or other companies in low-tax countries. In Bergman's case, a Swiss company, Persona AG, had been set up, which received several hundred thousand dollars in film royalties from Bergman films. The company never undertook any projects, and it was dissolved in 1974. At this point, the money was transferred back to Sweden and Bergman paid capital-gains tax on the "profit" from his "investment" in the company. Had the film royalties been sent directly to Sweden, Bergman's company would have had to pay a considerably higher sum in corporation tax. The tax authorities suspected that the Swiss company had been set up simply for the purpose of avoiding taxes; Bergman claimed from the beginning that the company had been set up to finance joint film ventures with Federico Fellini, which never came through, and when it was clear that the joint films would not materialize, the company was dissolved.

Bergman was arrested for questioning in late January and indicted some time later. Versions of the arrest differ. The police version is that they didn't have too much time to spare to get hold of Bergman, since the statute of limitations on the crime (which involved his tax return for 1970) was to run out in a few weeks. They had tried to telephone him several times to make an appointment for a hearing with the police, but had been told that "he wasn't available before April." It was only at this point—given the impending statute of limitations deadline—that they decided to get him at the Theater. According to the policeman in charge,

> With the help of a guard the policemen contacted Bergman's secretary at the Theater, and the secretary told Bergman that the police wanted to talk with him. Shortly thereafter, Bergman came out, and he left the Theater undramatically. The policemen, who wore civilian dress, were never inside the rehearsal area, not to speak of on the stage, and could not be observed by the actors.

Although initial press reports of Bergman's arrest stated or implied that police had virtually stormed the stage, the other version of Bergman's arrest—given not by Bergman himself, but by leaders of the Royal Dramatic Theater in an angry letter to the Swedish Chief State Prosecutor—agrees that the police never came onto the stage, but states:

> It was only the strong refusal of the Theater's chief secretary that prevented the police from coming into the rehearsal area, and instead content themselves with having Bergman immediately called into the Theater office where one policeman waited while the other went down to the stage entrance in order to, as he put it, "cover the exit."

The Theater heads also disputed the police story that Bergman could have said that he was unavailable until April.

Quickly, the other main facts of the case are these: shortly after his arrest, Bergman suffered a nervous breakdown and was hospitalized. In March, the criminal case against him was dropped. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly, in late April, Bergman announced in a long letter published in a mass circulation newspaper that he was leaving

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Sweden. He also revealed in this letter that the tax authorities were considering ruling that he had underpaid his taxes in some of his tax returns after 1970, a ruling not involving criminal charges of tax evasion but merely billing the taxpayer for the amount of underpayment.

SO MUCH for the facts. What of the implications?

Swedish taxes are high, even for people in ordinary income brackets. How high they are is frequently exaggerated in sensationalistic articles in the American press that confuse marginal tax rates with total tax rates and paste over differences in the way taxes are levied in Sweden and in America. (*Newsweek's* correspondent in Sweden appears to have a particularly conservative bias and is one of the prime sinners here.)

In Sweden, income taxes and local taxes are collected together, and property taxes play a very small role. Thus, when figures are given about the "tax bite" in Sweden, it should be remembered that these figures include not only income tax but the functional equivalents of state income taxes and local property taxes.

With all this, a Swedish worker with an income of 50,000 crowns a year (about $11,500) has a total direct tax burden of about 35 percent. To this must be added a hefty sales tax of 17 percent on everything he buys, including food. These taxes go primarily to transfer payments (family allowances, housing allowances, pensions), which have a redistributive effect, and to such government programs as job creation and retraining, day-care centers, education and housing. (It should be remembered that Sweden almost completely avoided the effects of the economic downturn in the rest of the industrialized world during 1975, despite her heavy dependence on foreign trade.) Since these programs are popular, almost all Swedish political leaders agree that radical changes in the tax system are impossible—which does not mean that many Swedes do not grumble about taxes, and that some do not grumble very loudly. In the '70s the major Social Democratic efforts in the taxation area have involved lowering marginal tax rates (the tax on the last dollar of income—in a progressive tax system the marginal rates are higher than the average rates) for people with average incomes.

Most people with high incomes—whose taxes are considerably higher than the 35 percent paid by the average worker—would prefer, of course, to have lower taxes. Some go to great length to avoid taxes. It is possible to argue that the social costs of taxing at a rate that makes successful tax evasion quite profitable, and of a control apparatus to detect tax evasion, do not outweigh the benefits of very high taxes for the rich. It is also possible to make the opposite argument. It is not, I think, possible to argue seriously that Swedish society is coming apart at the seams because of taxes, or that the checking of tax returns implies a police state.

As for the implications of the events surrounding Bergman's arrest, I think the key question is: how often do similar examples of alleged abuse of power by bureaucrats take place? Many of the press accounts outside of Sweden implied that Bergman's arrest was merely one in a supposedly enormous universe of such events. Swedish bureaucrats doubtlessly make their share of mistakes, but nobody who knows Swedish society can claim that Sweden is a country of knocks at the door in the middle of the night. It seems to me that the suspicions of the tax authorities against Bergman at least justified his being questioned (I have no competence to judge his possible guilt) and that Bergman's extreme reaction against the form of his arrest relates as much to Bergman's sensitive nature (his fear of being humiliated) as anything else.

The Bergman case has clearly hurt the Social Democratic government politically. The Gallup poll taken after Bergman's departure from Sweden showed the Social Democrats down by 4 percent, the largest month-to-month change registered by any political party since polls began being taken. It has, among other things, been a lightning rod for natural discontents with the tax burden. In fact, the most interesting aspect of the Bergman affair may be, why have the opposition parties done so little to exploit the case politically? *That* does indeed say something about how Swedish politics works, a good deal more than many of the implications drawn by American journalists. □

To Our Contributors

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- And please also be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. —THE EDITORS

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Richard Lowenthal

Capitalist Dynamics and Western Values

THE CULTURAL CONTRADICTIONS OF CAPITALISM, by Daniel Bell. New York: Basic Books. 282 pp. $12.95.

The first volume of Daniel Bell's sociological diagnosis of our time—*The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*—was described as "a venture in social forecasting": it concentrated on tendencies toward social transformation originating primarily in the economic-technological sphere, and saw the political system as facing corresponding tasks of adjustment. This second volume—*The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*—is imbued with a sense of crisis that was absent from the first. The changes in the cultural sphere that form its main theme are seen as causing a loss of social cohesion rather than a constructive transformation of Western societies, and the political task of restoring the cohesion with a new "public philosophy" appears to depend on a new "Great Instauration," a creative act of religious and cultural renewal that may or may not arrive and certainly cannot be brought about at will.

Bell's approach is based on the idea that complex and dynamic societies cannot be understood as unified "systems" in which each part develops as a function of the whole, but that they are composed of three major, interconnected yet autonomous "realms"—the economy, the polity, and the culture—each of which develops according to its own inherent logic. "Contradictions" may and do arise from those autonomous developments. Bell is putting forward the thesis that in Western capitalist societies a major, dysfunctional contradiction has arisen between the capitalist economy with its requirements for rationality and discipline, and the cultural sphere, in which the Puritan temper and the Protestant work ethic, largely corresponding to the above requirements, have increasingly succumbed to an urge for limitless self-fulfillment. First expressed in the arts, this urge now has led to a generalized hedonistic breakthrough of uncontrolled appetites and irrational impulses. To this breakthrough of impulses Bell largely attributes the growing distributive conflicts in the polity of the Western democracies—notably the "revolution of rising entitlements" and the trend toward growing inflation resulting from the "fiscal crisis of the state."

Though both Bell's books are composed of reworked versions of a number of essays written over a span of several years and partly overlapping in date, the elements determining the mood of the new volume reflect the experiences of a more recent and more critical period. But the value of the work as a major contribution to social understanding does not depend on the reader's sharing that mood or accepting Bell's thesis. Indeed, one of Bell's main qualities as a sociologist is a capacity for describing social change in an immense variety of aspects, as if circling around his subject and throwing light on it from ever new sides; and in this book he has illustrated his thesis of the hedonistic breakthrough with an impressive wealth of material—gleaned from the history of both art and religion, and also from the new life-styles that have evolved with the growth of the mass consumption society, particularly in the United States. Yet it is the inevitable limitation of a review article that it cannot attempt to reproduce the rich texture of its subject but must

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concentrate on criticizing the underlying skeleton of arguments. In what follows, I shall first try to present this skeleton of Bell's cultural analysis and then confront it with some possible alternative interpretations; I shall confine my remarks on the political part of the book to a brief conclusion.

The Strands of Cultural Change

BELL DEFINES the cultural realm as "the arena of expressive symbolism in art or religious forms that seek to explore and express the meaning of human existence." Because this exploration is not historically cumulative as in science but must return again and again to the same basic problems, there can be no single direction of change in culture as in economic or technological development. But Bell believes that there has been a single direction of change within *Western* culture during the capitalist era—along the "axial principle" of self-fulfillment by limitless experience. Moreover, he contends that in the "modern" era, which he dates roughly from the middle of the 19th century, "culture has become the most dynamic component of our civilization, outreaching the dynamism of technology itself"—an independent factor of change for its own sake, unhampered by economic constraints or political resistance. Culture, in short, has increasingly taken the lead in transforming modern Western society.

Bell does not suggest that the victory of the principle of self-fulfillment, or of hedonism, over the older Puritan attitudes has come about by a single chain of causation; in a number of chapters he follows various strands of this development in more or less detail.

The strand he describes most fully is an aesthetic one: the replacement of the spatial and temporal order, sequence, and harmony that are characteristic of "classical" post-Renaissance art, and of the "objectifying" distance that went with it, by an increasing effort to represent the subjective chaos of impressions and to assault the spectator or audience until finally, in the 1960s, the borderline between art and "life" supposedly had disappeared. He sees this development as conditioned by the new experiences of rapid motion, height, and noise, by the gradual loss of intelligible images of a rational order of nature (and society?), and by the increasing emancipation of the artist from social norms and forms and the exaltation of his subjective "genius."

A second strand, treated in less detail but presumably no less important, is of a religious nature and comprises the consequences of secularization and more particularly of the loss of faith in individual immortality. This not only deprives the traditional morality of self-restraint of its transcendental sanctions and rewards, but creates a deep, though often unconscious sense of the futility of a finite life, and a reactive passion to fill it with infinite experience. Thus "Faustian" rage to live, this ever dissatisfied and ultimately joyless form of "hedonism," is seen as expressing the post-Christian individual's inability to accept his own mortality.

A third strand, finally, is directly linked to changes in the economic and social structure—to the effects of urbanization and the rise of a mass-consumption society. Puritan discipline was most effective under the ever watchful eyes of the small-town community; the anonymity of the large, sinful city and the mobility of modern life multiply all kinds of temptation. As advanced capitalism becomes dependent on the creation of ever new wants, as advertisements and movies suggest a growing range of luxuries and installment-selling puts them within reach, and as rising productivity leads to expanding leisure that has to be filled with "fun," the paradox develops that the economic system requires its members to act according to a Protestant ethic of duty in the sphere of work yet according to a hedonist ethic of enjoyment in the sphere of consumption.

In the end, the release of the sex instinct from all moral inhibitions, the release of material greed from communal social sanctions, and the release of demonic irrational urges from rational control converge to create a cultural climate that is increasingly hostile to the bureaucratic rationalization of life underlying the economic growth and administrative organization of modern industrial societies. The culture has become an "adversary culture"; the impulsive individualism of the artist has come to dominate the life-style at the expense of the rational and disciplined individualism of the bourgeois.

A Broader View of Western Culture

AS BELL UNROLLS this canvas, the reader cannot fail to recognize that he illuminates many important features in the evolution of Western capitalist societies. Yet, at the same time his concept of Western culture appears to me both one-sided and not sufficiently integrated with the analysis of other social processes.

To show this, I propose to start from his

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definition of the cultural realm as "the arena of expressive symbolism in art or religious forms that seek to explore and express the meaning of human existence." I would suggest that a culture indeed is characterized by a particular vision of the meaning of human existence that distinguishes it from other cultures—but that vision is not only symbolically expressed in art and religion: it underlies the common values that are embodied in norms of conduct and assure the cohesion of a society. It is, of course, true that these values are symbolically expressed, and impressed on the members of the society, in religion or myth before they are rationally formulated as part of a system of thought; but it is the values themselves and not the symbolic expressions that constitute the core of the culture. Nor is it fruitful to mark off "the arena of expressive symbolism" by itself as the cultural realm. We must include in it also the mechanisms that assure the transmission of these values from generation to generation, and that bring about their partial transformation under the impact of changing conditions. This means that the techniques of education—of "socialization"—both in the family and in specialized institutions, and the psychology of character formation are as vital parts of any culture, and as vital subjects for any study of cultural change, as are religion and art. In the case of the modern West, the weakening of the family's educational role, both by the general separation of home and work in industrial society and by the growth of public education, would belong to that context, as would David Riesman's famous observation of the change from an "inner-directed" to an "other-directed" character or Erik Erikson's studies of the role of "identity crisis" in historical change.

What all this amounts to is that it seems to me more fruitful for the study of social change to use the term "culture" in the sense it has in "cultural anthropology," or in the way that Toynbee uses his concept of a "civilization"—that is, as describing a society's system of integrating beliefs and values rather than a separate sector of "cultural" activities. For if that is done, the question of the interaction between cultural change and other processes of social change appears in a new light. On one side, the "spontaneous" changes characteristic of a dynamic society—say, of an economic or demographic nature—will require adjustive changes in its institutions and norms of behavior; on the other, these institutional and normative changes will have to be achieved in the framework of a continuity of fundamental values, if the latter are to retain their binding force and the society's cultural integration is to be preserved. This means that the solution of the problems of a dynamic society depends on a continuous transformation of its underlying values, an ever new interpretation in the light of new conditions—in other words, on ever new acts of cultural creativity that may or may not be accomplished successfully. For success at any stage depends on the outcome of struggles—social, political, or "cultural," e.g., religious—that is not predetermined, while the price of prolonged failure may be cultural disintegration.

This approach is in one sense closer to Marx than to Bell, in that it looks at cultural change as responding to changes in the overall condition of society rather than developing from within a special cultural realm; but it is closer to Toynbee than to Marx in that it is not deterministic, but accepts the truth that in given situations, cultural creativity may or may not succeed. A dynamic society, like that of the West, is from that viewpoint a society that must live dangerously: it keeps creating problems for itself whose creative solution is never assured in advance.

I am speaking of Western society and Western culture; for I think that Bell would agree that there is no such thing as a "capitalist culture." Capitalism has been successfully taken over by Japan in a cultural framework different from that of the West, while Western culture existed long before the capitalist stage in the development of Western society. But if that is true, we must go back to a time before that capitalist stage, before the age of the Puritan entrepreneur, for an understanding of the fundamental Western values. These values include a belief in reason, which implies the belief in a rationally intelligible order of the universe. They include the affirmation of the uniqueness of the human individual, which implies some "natural" rights for that individual. They include the acceptance of the binding character of the ties created by voluntary—not blood-given—communities. And they include the view of work in this world, meaning also productive physical work, as a positive merit and not an inevitable burden.

All these values have been reinterpreted again and again in Western history, precapitalist as well as capitalist. The idea of a rationally intelligible order has changed from a static, God-given order to that of a dynamic world analyzed by science. The idea of the rights of the individual has evolved from the medieval concept of the rights of each

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according to his station, to the "bourgeois" rights to equal political and legal status, and to contemporary ideas of the right to equal security and equal chances in the social and economic field. The idea of binding communal ties has expanded from the early Christian congregation and the medieval city to binding national and potentially supranational loyalites, and the idea of law as the necessary body of rules to draw the line between individual rights and communal duties has grown with it. Finally, the idea of the positive merit of work, first developed in the medieval monastic orders, has received a new and intensified interpretation in the Protestant ethic, making it the mainspring for the "rationalization" of conduct, amounting to an instrumentalization of other spheres of life under the primacy of the economic imperative.

Capitalism and the Balance of Values

IF WE LOOK at the processes of cultural change described by Bell in relation to this framework of values, the breakthrough of hedonism might at first sight appear as another aspect of the reinterpretation of the affirmation of the individual—a shift from the Puritan emphasis on the primacy of his immortal soul to an exclusive emphasis on his earthly life as a goal in itself. But on closer inspection, it becomes clear that we are dealing with something more fundamental—a simultaneous tendency toward a crisis of belief in the other values of reason, community ties, and work, and a hypertrophy of individual self-affirmation ending in emptiness. Yet the integrating function of a culture clearly depends on a measure of balance between its constituent values, even though the precise weighting of that balance may vary in differing periods of the culture's development and in different ideological movements in the course of its history—and disorientation becomes inevitable once that balance becomes radically disturbed.

What can we learn from Bell's analysis about the nature and causes of that shift? To begin with the aesthetic component, I confess—at the risk of being regarded as a philistine—that I have difficulty in accepting his account of "modernism" in art as an independent factor of change. He is certainly convincing in describing the loss of a sense of order, harmony, and sequence, the consequent renunciation of the effort to reconstruct that objective order in the aesthetic form imposed on the artist's subjective impulses, and the increasingly chaotic breakthrough of these impulses as a central trend of "modernism." But while art may generalize this breakthrough by expressing it in its vision of the world, the underlying loss of belief in an intelligible, rational order must be rooted in the experience of society before it can be proclaimed and spread by art. Moreover, the cathartic effect of classical art was linked to the taming of the impulse by the form that made its representation acceptable to the community; the breakdown of the form presupposes a weakening of communal ties before it becomes a factor accelerating that process.

Again, the loss of religious faith, and of belief in personal immortality in particular, did not generally, and for several generations not typically, destroy the sense of a meaningful task in a finite life nor the effective sanctions of the moral conscience representing the individual's ties with the community. Traditional belief in a divine order was effectively replaced in the Western world by belief in meaningful historical evolution toward "progress" in the direction of common values—toward improved rational understanding, expanding individual rights, and increasingly universal loyalties. Traditional, unchanging moral norms were replaced in a changing, but not too rapidly changing world by the conscience of the growing individual, incorporating an adult model of moral attitudes and thus forming the "inner-directed character." It is only the continuous acceleration of change in the growing individual's experience of daily life as well as in techniques of production, social structure, and political order, that has, by making older-generation models less and less relevant, led to the increasing replacement of the "inner-directed" by the "other-directed" character and the consequent weakening of moral certainties. And it is only the increasing failure of Western history to make good the promise of matching technical and scientific progress with value-oriented progress, the grave world crises and world wars of the 20th century, and the threat of total destruction, that have given rise to a widespread sense of meaninglessness, to nihilistic outbreaks and horrors reinforcing it, and to the anarchic forms of a pseudohedonist rage of self-fulfillment by self-destruction.

For all that, I should of course agree with Bell that the secularization—or, as he would prefer to say, the "profanization"—of the modern consciousness has been one of the major factors in the loss of cultural balance we are experiencing. As secularization itself is the outcome of the crises of traditional societies on one side and of the growth

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of a scientific world view on the other, it thus takes its place among the elements of ever accelerating social, technological, and intellectual change that has made it more and more difficult to preserve the fundamental values of our civilization by renewing interpretation and by adjustment of the moral norms and the institutions derived from them to changing conditions. As the dynamics of capitalism has been the prime mover of this process of accelerating change in the West, it is true that all the strands of cultural change may ultimately be derived from these dynamics. But we must not lose sight of the other side of the argument: accelerating change only produces a sense of meaninglessness, a loss of belief in an intelligible order, and a disintegration of moral ties, when the creative response to these accelerating changes fails to solve the problems of a meaningful social and international order under contemporary conditions and to transmit an effective moral sense without insistence on rigidly unchanging particular norms.

But there is still a more substantive sense in which the loss of cultural balance is linked to the dynamics of capitalism. As Bell points out, the unleashing of the Hobbesian appetites was a driving force in the rise of capitalism from the start, along with the Puritan temper and in conflict with it. In loosening the powerful engine of the limitless hunt for profit upon our world, these driving forces were bound to upset the balance between individual self-affirmation and social ties: to that extent, the whole capitalist era has been a lopsided development within the history of Western culture. The further weakening of the sense of intelligible order and of communal ties by recent critical developments has come on top of this original lopsidedness, and conversely that lopsidedness all along has made the creative solution of new problems more difficult.

In this context Bell's third strand of cultural change—that dealing with the rise and the consequences of a society of mass consumption—takes its full weight. For here the effect of capitalist dynamics on the value system is not mediated by the effect of the general change in society on people's image of the world, but it is direct and tangible: with the increase of leisure time and of the range of available goods, the mentality of competition has been transferred from the work sphere to the sphere of consumption for ever wider strata. This is the most effective and massive form of the hedonistic breakthrough, and it is not tied to a sense of crisis but to an increase of general satisfaction. There can be no doubt, however, that this has greatly strengthened the lopsidedness of the capitalist version of Western culture.

At the same time, I am not as convinced as Bell that the triumph of hedonism in mass consumption is incompatible with a (non-Puritan) work ethic, or that it is responsible for the decline of the work ethic we observe in the advanced Western countries. Within certain limits, the willingness to work, and to work well, seems to be most effectively stimulated by material incentives, and these are strongest where there is a great deal of leisure and a wide choice of objects for filling it. What real weakening we observe in the ethic of work, and particularly in the sense of responsibility for work, seems to be primarily caused by a generally lessened belief in the inherent meaningfulness of one's contribution to society, aggravated by the lack of scope for initiative in working on a conveyor belt or as human annex to a computer, and secondarily to a weakening of sanctions for irregular or careless work in conditions of near-full employment and improved social security.

Some Political Consequences

I HAVE LARGELY accepted Bell's description of the phenomena of cultural change in our society, but have tried to put their analysis in a somewhat different context. Above all, I have put less emphasis on the autonomy of the "cultural realm"—though I do not, of course, deny the importance of the fact that religious and cultural changes follow a logic of their own—and I have put more emphasis on the impact of the process of general social change on the value system of a society. The reader may well ask, what difference does that make?

The difference, I believe, lies in what possibly could be done about it all. If the increasingly widespread perception of the world as chaotic and of individual life as meaningless, and the consequent turn of masses of people to a hectic and often self-destructive search for any kind of experience to fill the void, are the consequences of a largely autonomous development in the cultural realm, the only remaining hope is a new cultural creation *ex nihilo*—a "Great Instauration." But as that cannot be brought about by conscious activity, we literally can do nothing. That is not, of course, Bell's own conclusion—he is far too responsible to be consistent on this point. Yet it is the conclusion that seems to follow from his analysis.

If, however, the cultural sense of *anomie* is

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caused by our failures to deal creatively with the consequences of accelerated social change—in the economic and political, international and domestic, educational and behavioral fields—the remedy, though difficult to discover and to apply, depends on our conscious activity. The cultural crisis is not a *diabolus ex machina*—it is the most general penalty for failing to solve our social problems, along with such specific penalites as wars, totalitarian revolutions, mass unemployment, currency chaos, hunger, or ecological devastation.

Bell, of course, does not ignore these concrete problems. In the shorter second part of his book, he deals—after a descriptive account of recent American developments—with the manner in which changes in the social and economic structure of Western capitalist society are tending to lead to an "overloading" of the polity and to consequent instability of democratic institutions. With the increasing importance of common tasks that have to be satisfied outside the market, the "public household" has become, first, an expanding sector and, finally, a more and more controlling organ of the economy. But the pressure of increasing group claims in the modern democracies—the "revolution of rising entitlements," itself partly rooted in the hedonistic cultural attitude—subjects the public household to increasing strains manifested in the dilemmas of economic growth and inflation. On one hand, growth is the best condition for satisfying the plurality of group demands, but the increase of social services and of communal consumption tends to slow down economic growth; on the other hand, Bell says that a growth rate geared to full employment, combined with the low productivity advance in the expanding service sector, produces a "normal" inflation of 4 to 5 percent per year, which any random shock may cause to accelerate, and that inflation brings about a new distributive "class war" between the working class and the middle classes, which endangers the functioning of the democratic system. He finds the only chance of a solution in the elaboration and acceptance of a new "public philosophy" to guide a democratic government in arbitrating between the diverse group interests according to the requirements of the public interest, and to help it in winning broad consensus for the resulting policies.

As Bell's analysis in this economic-political part of his book is rather more sketchy than in its cultural main part, I do not propose here to discuss it in detail. However, it is my conviction that the inflation rate, which is really inseparable from steady growth in a controlled market economy, is rather lower than he assumes—2 to 3 percent rather than 4 to 5 percent was the rule in most of the Western world until the middle 1960s. I also believe that the sensitivity to random shocks provoking a sudden acceleration is not inherent in the economic system as such, but in the institutional weaknesses of the international currency system that collapsed in 1971 (the privileged position of the dollar and the abuses made possible by it). I further believe that, writing in a crisis atmosphere, Bell has underestimated the powers of endurance and recovery of the Western democracies. As I write, even Britain shows signs of turning the corner in the struggle against double-digit inflation, and that not by an authoritarian curbing of interest groups but rather by the beginning acceptance of a common "public philosophy."

By contrast, I feel that Bell, writing in the United States, has not given sufficient weight to the increasing irrelevance of decisions made by most individual states to the central economic problems of our time, and to the paramount need for international and even supranational mechanisms of decision on such vital issues as world currency management, raw material prices, and resource conservation, basic food supplies, etc.

But important as these specific points are, they do not touch the central issue. Bell is clearly right: there is an inherent "contradiction" between the untrammeled pursuit of material group interests in a modern, pluralistic democracy and the functional needs of effective management in an increasingly communal economy. As I share his rejection of any authoritarian solution of the dilemma based on the abolition of democratic group rights, I am left with his alternative—the voluntary limitation of group claims by a broad consensus on a common view of the public interest. The creation of that broad consensus indeed is what democratic leadership in modern conditions is largely about. The extent to which this goal can be reached in particular countries and in the West in general, in the overcoming of the recent inflation-recession crisis and in the longer run, will depend less on a sudden restoration of the "sacred ties among men" than on the ability of democratic leaders to develop a plausible vision of just what the public interest requires in a given situation, by what institutional means common solutions can be achieved, and how they would affect each group and individual. Conversely, only the achievement of concrete solutions for the crucial problems of our communal economy can also, by demonstrating the

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interdependence and compatibility of individual and group interests over a sufficiently wide range, revive and strengthen the awareness of communal ties and reduce the lopsidedness in the balance of Western cultural values.

At one point, talking of the crisis of belief and the loss of a civic sense in the capitalist world, Bell remarks that the socialist idea, which had seemed the alternative, had "died" in the Soviet Union, in China, and in the Third World owing to the total denial of individual rights and freedoms practiced there. Yet it seems to me that what Bell describes as the strengthening of communal control over the market economy by the "public household," and as the restoration of the primacy of common interest in a society founded on individual freedom, is what most non-Communist Westerners mean by the socialist idea. Because of his evident concern about the phenomena of cultural crisis and decay in the West, Bell has in recent discussions frequently been described as a conservative. But the direction in which he seeks a solution is by no means conservative—it is, now as before, the direction in which all democratic socialists are looking. □

David Bromwich

A Free Mind

THE WORM OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND OTHER ESSAYS, by Nicola Chiaromonte. Edited by Miriam Chiaromonte. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 270 pp. $10.00.

Nicola Chiaromonte was an *essayist* in the original sense of that curious and difficult word. One feels that he is writing always to make a test or trial of his own meaning. Plato, the philosopher whose name he most often invokes, taught the proper use of dialectic against the seduction of rhetoric, and Chiaromonte has the purity of an inquiring spirit. The whole bias of his nature is opposed to the conceit of writing as performance, which is a uniquely modern debasement and exaltation of rhetoric. He seems to be saying, not "Here is my mind; see how it works," but something like: "These are some arguments and facts I have just been thinking about; what can we make of them?" As a political thinker he is a contingent, high-spirited, remarkably unpolemical socialist. It is perhaps safest to call him a libertarian who never found it possible to place a low value on the individual or the community. In short, a temperate skeptic. How many of these remain? Beneath all of his essays, where the signature would go, one might easily engrave Emerson's comment on Montaigne: "Cut these words, and they would bleed."

I have been trying to give some impression of a book that is not appropriately described as a collection of essays. It is a sustained glimpse of the mind of one scholar—but the furthest thing imaginable from Nietzsche's "squint-eyed soul"—lucid, tactful, uncapricious, and operating at its depths. The opening paragraph of Chiaromonte's essay on Albert Camus may give a local sense of his generosity and distinctive care for a given subject.

> A man is dead: you think of his living face, of his gestures, his actions, and of the moments you shared, trying to recapture an image that is dissolved forever. A writer is dead: you reflect upon his work, upon each book, upon their vital movement toward a deeper meaning; and you seek to form a judgment that takes account of the secret source from which they sprang and which is now stilled. But the picture of the man is not made up of the sum of your memories; nor the figure of the writer of the sum of his works. And one cannot discover the man through the writer, or the writer through the man. Everything is fragmentary, everything is incomplete, everything is the prey of mortality even when destiny seems to have granted both man and writer the gift of living to the limit of his forces, and of giving everything humanly possible, as in the case of Tolstoy. The story of a man is always incomplete; it is sufficient to think of what could have been different—almost everything—to know that his story can never contain the meaning of a human life, but only what that existence was permitted to be and to give. The truth was the living presence; and nothing can replace it. Immortality is an illusion for thought and art, as for man. They are nothing but relics mutely surviving time's erosion and history's disasters, like monuments of stone. But it is in this very fragility—which equates the humblest existence with the one that we falsely call "great" and is simply one that had the luck to express itself—that there lies the meaning and value of human life. And that value is eternal.

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Not only Camus is celebrated here, but an entire mode of survival, indeed of comprehension, by which men and their works, inextricably bound in the living fact, are allowed to maintain each their separate integrity. Here as elsewhere Chiaromonte's concern is for the idea of limit. In another essay he quotes Simone Weil approvingly: "We are only geometricians of matter; the Greeks were first of all geometricians in their apprenticeship to virtue." They had the sense of limit. And one lesson art can teach, because it has needed to learn it so often and patiently, is an awareness of life itself as a limiting factor in every ambition.

Chiaromonte recurs to the example of Tolstoy in his eulogy for Gandhi. It is the appalling freedom from self-contradiction in Gandhi that robs us of our power to praise. But Tolstoy, messianic and helpless, is a creature we can understand; he is blessed with our own self-indulgence and merciful duality.

> While preaching chastity he was harassing his wife with a most demanding lust; while excoriating the meat-eaters he went to the kitchen at night to eat meat secretly; and he never succeeded in extricating himself from his social position as a famous writer, a landowner, and a paterfamilias. This is complexity. We can sympathize both with the ethical effort and with his failure. Or we can smile at both. We can wonder and admire.

In such wonder and admiration is the explanation that does not explain away. The failure being contemplated may be amusing enough and no more, but the act of sympathy by which it is understood, without forgiveness, and set in relation to other efforts, not all of them failures, seems to me a key to what the sense of limit meant to Chiaromonte.

That sense lies at the very heart of everything he wrote. In particular, it shapes his passion for theater as the place where people who are forever inhabiting a single role, their "everyday mask," can step out of it for a moment to gain a distant prospect on themselves, more intelligent and perhaps more modest than what they knew before. "The spectators are free to receive the most upsetting revelations, aware that their purpose is not to wound but to arouse the part of themselves that is alive." Of this art of unmasking, Pirandello and Genet are the acknowledged masters. But Chiaromonte is receptive to the quite different logic of a political theater, which, in every age, must encourage citizens to reflect on the fate of the *polis* by depicting its troubles either openly or in disguise, in the heroic, the satiric, or the ironic mode. The most recent and fully articulated program for such a theater was supplied by Brecht, and Chiaromonte's objection to "epic theater" is that it is not really political at all. For Brecht, it is finally

> the theater of stagecraft, the theater-as-spectacle, that asserts itself, finding in the aim of political edification support for the aestheticism that characterizes it. Why aestheticism? Because, by its nature, this theater transforms into a more or less phantasmagorical scenic image the incitement to action it intends to produce, so that the formal element naturally gains the upper hand.

To feel the truth of this, one need only consider the torpedo-touch formalism of *The Measures Taken.*

Having penetrated this far most critics would stop. But Chiaromonte recognizes that "Brecht's dice are loaded"; that he is an artist in spite of his theory; that "*Mother Courage* is in reality a pessimistic fable, indeed, nihilistic and misanthropic, much more than pacifist or anticapitalist"; and that *Galileo* too "deals with the baseness of man, and the baseness is not condemned; it is, rather, considered a legitimate defense of the individual against the violence of arms or the implacable force of institutions." In his saving inconsistency Brecht merely resembles the majority of artists big with theory. We may wish to think of Genet as another dramatist whose conclusions are happily at odds with his premises: his theater starts from what is viewed as an intimate connection of dramatic action with play-acting, of play-acting with risk, and of risk with criminality. This is the aspect of Genet not very concisely analyzed by Sartre—the use of the stage, and of public life in general, to construct a game of roles or "screens" endlessly elaborated. Chiaromonte, however, notes that the game can involve its audience only because it has an extra dimension of necessary and, if one will grant the paradox, edifying bad faith. "To want to be *the convict*," he observes, citing Rimbaud's vision of himself among the unregenerate, "also means that we feel we are in the right; it means that we want to be criminals *and* right at the same time, or, rather, that we do not want to be criminals but good men condemned to crime—in other words, men." The author of *Saint Genet* was long past knowing the force of so clear a formulation; the author of *The Balcony*, in a lucid interval, would have seen its truth.

FROM a constant and powerful emphasis one must surmise that Chiaromonte ranks theater highest among the arts. It provides the community and the

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individuals who compose it with their quintessential rite of self-identification, and in so doing serves the public good, both as history and as therapy. Alongside his essays on theater, Chiaromonte's passing allusions to film make strange reading. There is no need to mark instances because they are all in the same vein. Film is the corrupter, the leveller: it speaks in the voice of ideology and advertising and barbarism. Who would doubt that film has, of all the arts, the largest ability to distort facts? Alas, the ability has been used. But Chiaromonte is writing as an Italian, a contemporary of the postwar realists, a man to whom the films of De Sica and Rossellini could not have been entirely unknown. He writes as if these circumstances did not exist. And I think the prejudice that rules him is a deep and simple and Platonic one. At a moving-picture, seeing those images against the screen, he recalls Plato's myth of the cave, with the lantern-projections on the wall rooting the cave-dwellers to their darkness. At this point something in him rebels, and he will hear no more talk on the subject. With the respect due to any commanding myth one may still opt for common sense. The standard Romantic definition of art as energy shaped by intelligence—a definition that plainly informs much of Chiaromonte's writing—can in no way be read to exclude film *a priori* from the list of the arts. If the genius is there, the metal will not be base.

In Chiaromonte one takes these things in stride: his political sanity is owing after all to the same spirit of recalcitrance. He finds the virtue of any utopian idea in its unrealizability, and would prefer to treat every political ideal as utopian. For only by dealing with society as a means can we regard man as an end." I am prepared to propose that we adopt as a principle the notion that 'truth cannot be the daughter of time' and, consequently, that we make it a rule to exclude the 'temporal' element from every judgment about what is true and what is false, what is good and what is bad, what is just and what is unjust, what is useful and what is useless." In Marx, who contrasted the scientific economist's knowledge of "the final explanation" with the popular economist's subservience to "appearances," Chiaromonte is disturbed by the evident belief in truth as a single entity that is apprehended in time. "To start with, the illusions men have about their 'real' situation have no less 'reality' (practical consequences) than their 'final explanations,' for in society we are faced with men's *real* errors no less than with their true opinions." History is therefore the domain of psychology as well as politics, and, in a world that did not confuse *is* with *ought*, clarity of program would be less desired than purity of purpose. "We should, in short, consider only the phenomena, the facts and the individuals as they 'appear' in the present and never as products of a 'process' that prevents us from knowing what they are or what we should think of them." Or, to mingle two proverbs, it is wisest not to see the omelet for the eggs.

A humane skepticism will find fault not with socialism but with dogmatic socialist attacks on reformism. It is this tendency that Chiaromonte exposes in his brilliant political essays: "Modern Tyranny," "The Mass Situation and Noble Values," and the "Letter to Andrea Caffi," from which I have been quoting. Rather oddly he discovers a congenial fellow-spirit in Leo Strauss. But what consorts well with Chiaromonte's own bias is the distinction Strauss makes between ancient tyranny and the objectifying modern tyranny that has its source in Machiavelli. The modern tyranny of ideology and science is pervasive, subtler than mere politics, and altogether more dangerous than its ancient precursor. It has enlisted the intellectuals. And there is no visible end to it until intellectuals realize for themselves that the project of society-as-an-end can exist only in the mind. We are all indebted to Chiaromonte and Strauss, who, in their very different ways, but starting in each case from a hint in *The Republic*, have stressed the priority of man to what he builds so that it can never be forgotten.

Yet the intellectual's concern for the weightlessness or lack of imposed meaning in social life is real enough. Social life as we know it cannot sponsor "nobility"—a word that Chiaromonte is strong enough to use without quotation marks. To remain conscious of this lack at all times will lead one to the usual complaints about mass society and mass man. But how, asks Chiaromonte, can we pretend to hold ourselves above the very situation we claim as the cause of our suffering?

> When we reason as if the indistinct communication with others, imposed on us by our daily life, in no way injures our individuality or the quality of our "values," our reasoning implies an assumption that is not so simple: that those moments have no importance, are moments effectively indifferent. The trouble is that a sufficient number of unimportant moments and indifferent acts gives us the precise image of the perfect *mass man*—the man whose existence has minimal importance and who passively submits to this fact without even recognizing it.

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On Jimmy Carter

Editors:

It seems to me that Mario Soares, speaking from far-off Portugal, showed more understanding about Jimmy Carter and the 1976 elections than those *Dissent* editors who were wringing their hands and expressing various degrees of distress about the Carter candidacy, in the Summer issue of the magazine.

Perhaps Soares was more aware of the minuscule size of the organized socialist movement in this country. Perhaps he recognized the path American workers have taken for almost a century to advance their class interests—through alliances and influence within the Democratic party. Perhaps he understood better than some of his American friends that "working-class politics in this country has, therefore, meant allegiance to the Democrats," as William Spinrad put it in his perspicacious article in the Spring issue of *Dissent*. Perhaps his understanding of the failure of dogmatism and the progress achieved through coalition politics caused Soares to declare that Carter would be carrying on in the tradition of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Too many of us who are socialists forget the misgivings many socialists had about Roosevelt when he entered the campaign against Hoover. Too many socialists forget that there were some who adamantly took their stand for socialist revolution against social reform in the '30s. They forget that many radicals considered the early Roosevelt programs fascist. They also forget that some of the sharpest criticism of Roosevelt was that he was running without clear-cut ideas and programs for meeting the economic crisis. There was some truth to this, and some of the programs Roosevelt articulated in his 1932 campaign were far from the New Deal he finally offered. But these were not elections for the Prussian assembly in the 1840s nor even for the British and French parliaments today—these were elections that took their pattern and path from a distinctive American version of politics.

The working people were the major beneficiaries of the enactment of social security and unemployment insurance, of freedom for collective bargaining through the Wagner Act, and also of the programs of jobs through WPA, CCC, PWA, and many of the other agencies of the '30s. The great organizing drives of American workers, especially in the previously unorganized mass-production industries, took place under the impetus of the Roosevelt victory. It was the participation of labor in Democratic politics and the pressures of labor and liberals that brought about the first important redistribution of wealth and income in the New Deal period—inadequate though it was, not just by socialist standards but by the criterion of simple justice.

The leader of the Portuguese socialists must be as aware as any American socialist that Carter had not articulated and sponsored a specific and detailed program to advance this country's social and economic welfare. But it does seem that Soares did know something of American political history and of how American labor helped fill a vessel that seemed empty of specific social programs in 1932, but became the New Deal in the years that followed the election.

Nor was I surprised that Soares was informed of those specific programmatic attitudes Carter *had* espoused during his primary campaign. Oddly, one of these is specifically related to a matter that is very close to the activities and interests of Soares himself. In April the *Washington Post* published the text of a long interview with Carter. When one editor asked whether he would have supported military aid to the Angolan forces that had been backed by the U.S., Carter said—NO, he would not. The reporter shot back, Then you would allow events everywhere else to take the course they did in Angola [where the Russian/Cuban intervention was so successful]? Carter replied that he would not be boxed in by such an unwarranted inference. The mistake, Carter said, was made when the United States supported Portuguese colonialism against Angola for many years. That was the policy Carter would have opposed, and support of colonialism was the reason why American influence was so lacking when Angola finally fell to the Russian/Cuban-backed forces.

In that same interview Carter made it clear that the crisis of American cities would never be solved unless welfare costs were taken over by federal and state agencies. People who see little difference between the Ford-Dole and Carter-Mondale tickets can hardly be immersed in the political struggle of this country.

No one, least of all this writer, knows just what kind of president Carter might actually be. Nor is his election a cinch at this writing. But it is significant that the first among labor organizations to support Carter were the more progressive unions, both within the AFL-CIO and among independents such as the UAW. The hope that Soares expressed about a Carter administration may yet come to pass. It's worth working for.

JOSEPH CLARK
New York City □

Fritz Lang & the Nazis

Editors:

Henry Pachter's comments on Weimar culture (*Dissent*, Summer 1976) must have struck many readers as a notably forthright contribution to the ongoing debate. A writer who alludes *in passing* to "that grandiose failure, *The Magic Mountain*" makes you sit up and wait for what he will say next. And of course Mr. Pachter's observations are worth having simply because they are Mr.

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Pachter's: we know so little about the border regions of politics and culture that any front-line report is welcome. I would, however, rescue one reputation from the ironic anecdote in which Mr. Pachter left it to perish. The "mistaking of 'modern' for 'left'," he writes, "was almost universal. Fritz Lang, the director of *M*, and *Dr. Mabuse*, and of the populist, anticapitalist *Metropolis*, was about to become a maker of cultural policy in the Third Reich—when it was discovered that he had a Jewish grandmother." This makes it look as if Lang wanted very much to throw in with the Nazis.

Now, I am not sure whether Mr. Pachter found the evidence for his statement in Walter Laqueur's book or somewhere else. But I have heard Fritz Lang tell a remarkably different version of his encounter with the Nazi propaganda organization, and he has repeated the account in Andrew Sarris's *Interviews with Film Directors*, from which I quote:

> I was ordered to go to see Dr. Goebbels. I put on striped trousers and my cutaway jacket, stiff collar. I didn't feel very agreeable. . . . I was sitting opposite Dr. Goebbels and he said to me, "Look, I am terribly sorry, but we had to confiscate this picture [*The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*]. It was the ending we didn't like." He didn't say anything about the real reason—the Nazi slogans in the mouth of an insane criminal. . . . Finally he said to me, "The Fuehrer has seen your pictures, and he has said, 'This is the man who will give us the big Nazi pictures.'" I said, "I am tickled pink, Herr Minister." What else could I say? And this was the moment where I said to myself, "This evening is the last moment you can be sure of getting out of Germany." I looked at the clock. . . . At two thirty the banks close and how can I get out of here? I didn't get out. He was very nice. I said "Yes" to everything. When I got out, it was too late. I couldn't get my money out. I went home and said to my butler, "Look, I have to go to Paris. Put out the things necessary for a few days," because by now I didn't dare tell anybody the truth. . . . Because I was afraid that I was now tailed by someone. I came just one minute before the train left. I looked around over my shoulder. It was like a very bad moving picture. Next morning I was in Paris, and things were quiet for a bit. Then came a letter from the income tax people, saying, "There is a slight difference in income tax of the year 1927. I think you should come back as fast as possible." I was intelligent enough by now to know what that was about. . . . Eight days later I got a letter saying that they had confiscated all my money. Then they confiscated *M* and took everything."

It may well be that the Nazis "discovered" Lang's Jewish grandmother and, at some point, made her count against him. But so far as Lang knew, it was he that turned down the Nazis, by running away from them. If Mr. Pachter and I are indeed referring to the same event, a great deal depends on where you let the emphasis fall. I would add that *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* seems to me as thoroughly anti-Nazi as a movie of its time could be, without indicting Hitler's party by name, rank and number. Why Hitler was able to enjoy such a movie, is a question that would plunge this discussion farther into certain depths than any of us, I believe, wishes to go.

DAVID BROMWICH
New Haven, Connecticut

HENRY PACHTER Replies:

Does *Dissent* need "joke—unjoke" signs? I thought people would understand the irony: Goebbels calling in the representative of expressionist anxiety films to organize a Teutonic film industry! Probably he had seen *Die Nibelungen* done by Lang with his Nazi wife, Thea von Harbou, which indeed was the acme of tasteless self-glorification of the German race, and *Metropolis*, which (according to Gregor and Patalas in the authoritative German *History of the Film*) "contains all the Nazi tenets." And here sits poor Fritz Lang, knowing that one day his Jewish grandmother will surface but obliged to say "Ja, Herr Minister." I certainly did not mean to impugn the character of Fritz Lang any more than I would doubt Tucholsky's leftist credentials by recording his admiration of the *Camelots du Roi*. I was trying to warn: *don't confuse avant-garde art with left politics!* Strangely, this equation is made where Weimar intellectuals are concerned; but no one would mistake Marinetti or d'Annunzio for Communists.

So, I am sorry for sloppy wording, but it is a fact that Goebbels thought Lang was their man, and I just wonder whether he had not inquired first among knowledgeable people whether Lang had uttered social democratic or pacifist thoughts. I am sure it would not have entered his mind to make a similar offer to Erich von Stroheim or to Georg Pabst. The question that David Bromwich thinks is too deep to go into—why did Hitler like Lang's films?—is just the one that is interesting. Kracauer thought that all Lang films glorify the power of evil; Patalas and Gregor charge that Lang knows no alternative to either chaos or dictatorship, and is fascinated by both.

Incidentally, I was speaking not of *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1930), for which Lang has claimed an anti-fascist message (Kracauer says that to contemporaries this could hardly have been noticeable), but of the earlier *Dr. Mabuse the Gambler* (1922), which unambiguously caters to the sado-masochistic instincts that Adorno's studies identified with "the authoritarian personality."

Consciously or unwittingly, Lang's films granted his audiences vicarious participation in the Black Mass. It may be controversial whether any work of art can contribute to the formation of political attitudes, but if they can do nothing but fortify existing inclinations, then Lang's films certainly pleased Hitler for good reason. Even the second Mabuse film permits the viewer total identification with the powerful though evil leader. If this abandonment to the inevitable is compared with Brecht's methodical effort to prevent such identification, for instance in the current production of *The Three Penny Opera*, the difference leaps to one's eyes. Kracauer has

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shown in detail how German film-makers (and especially Lang) succumbed to the temptations of their environment, and he has also pointed to some glaring inconsistencies between various accounts that Lang has given of his interview with Dr. Goebbels. □

He Liked *Nashville*

Editors:

Celia Morris, in her piece in the Winter 1976 issue on Robert Altman's *Nashville,* finds Altman's characters unbelievable clichés, the movie antifeminist, pretentious, boring, and, compared with *On the Waterfront,* a failure in evoking common everyday life. Worst of all, in her view, *Nashville* is morally slack. For deeper understanding of the human condition and for moral strength, Morris prefers the likes of Theodore Dreiser, Nathanael West, and Flannery O'Connor.

Really, it is unfair to have someone with such a simplistic and rigid view of realism write about the kind of work Altman did in *Nashville.* The film is not morally vapid; it is about moral vapidness. It is about mass society, mass and individual self-deception, illusions, and screwed-up values—very realistic in its way and on a deep level. Altman hails from Kansas City, and to this old St. Louisian the character types he peopled his movie with are not far-fetched.

Morris at times writes as if she wanted some redeeming schmaltz and oodles of firm answers to open questions. There are no good marriages and sweet relationships, she complains; Altman's picture of the landscape is too relentlessly chrome and plastic. She cannot understand how a successful female country music star could be "married to a boor and a slob—a man who may in some obscure way care for her, but who manipulates and humiliates her as a way of making his living." She wants Altman's explanation. But she is sure this story line is part of his aim to degrade womankind.

The movie is flawed, so is *On the Waterfront,* but it is great too. The inanely pompous BBC correspondent, if she really was meant to be from BBC, was a mistaken joke carried too far. Nevertheless, Morris herself goes particularly wrong with her not uncommon judgment that Altman puts down women. If the history of the sexes were reversed, and men were oppressed, men would be protesting with the same nonsense. Without regard to sex, *Nashville*'s characters effused mixed-up, selfish feelings.

Nelson S. Dearmont
Garden City, N.Y. □

BOOKS *continued from page 445*

> Even on occasions of little weight . . . our experience of the crowd is not limited to the feeling of anonymity. Indeed, to be precise, it is not we who feel anonymous in the crowd; it is the others who are anonymous to us. However, we know that the same thing happens to us in the eyes of others. In reality, no one is anonymous, but we all find ourselves in a situation of anonymity. It is because of this (given the very ordinary necessity that has brought us together) that we can speak of ourselves as all equal, as units that are undifferentiated and interchangeable.

The entire book would be justified if only by that quiet challenge to Ortega. Anyone who has felt the true queerness of the situation, which is not such as to induce conceits either of aloofness or revulsion, must applaud Chiaromonte's final note of warning: "the intellectual can distinguish himself from the mass only by the greater consciousness he may have of their common situation. And he can show this consciousness in only one way—by speaking the truth without presuming that it has been given to him alone."

What I called, for want of a better phrase, the sense of limit, ought to have emerged as a theme in many of these quotations, from their common modesty of tone. It is hard to think of a writer one might compare Chiaromonte to; other European names are possible but unsatisfying. He seems most personal, however, in his recollection of Camus. and that may be where to begin. *The Fall* was about the ordeal of coming to know the relation between one's own humanity and humanity. Where an abstract faith in the dignity of life is all we have, we are obliged nevertheless to let our faith draw strength from something as immediate as a cry in the night. It is not the cry of Dostoevsky's children; it is, overwhelmingly, of this world. Human and humane are words, shockingly discrete from each other, which we try to bring together. Perhaps Chiaromonte too would have said that a vigilance on behalf of this ordeal, lest it lose all severity, was the great task of his life. Camus seems to be passing out of fashion, possibly because seriousness at his intensity is frowned upon. Chiaromonte, a clearer and less self-dramatizing thinker, may be slow to gain the attention he deserves. But both are destined to survive. They give readers what philosophy must give: fortitude, the belief that some ideas are worth fighting for *or against,* and a recognition that belief is itself a preliminary form of action. □

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